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### Mission Sermon.

2 Cor. 5, 13—15.

“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” our Savior said to His disciples immediately before His ascension. And the disciples were ever zealous in carrying out this command. Christ Crucified was their message, not only to their brethren according to the flesh, the Jews, but also to those who were without Christ and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, the Gentiles, or heathen.

They and their fellow-laborers were scourged, stoned, and cast into prison; they suffered hunger and thirst; they were forced to fight with wild beasts in order to amuse those whose eternal welfare they were seeking. As soon as those who had not suffered the loss of life regained the power of speech, yea, as long as they still retained this power, their one message was: Jesus is the Only-begotten of the Father; He was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification, he that believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” such, too, is Christ’s command to our Church and our Synod. And from the very beginning the fathers and founders of our Synod were not slow in carrying out this command. They preached Christ Crucified not only to those who were their brethren according to the flesh, the German immigrants, but also to others. They lost no time in sending missionaries to other peoples, countries, and races. And those first missionaries of ours, even though they were not scourged, stoned, and cast into prison, yet suffered untold hardships and frequently were in great want; but to the last they preached Christ Crucified to a sin-stained world.

And now the command: “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” has come to us. Are we willing and ready to do so? Are we willing to step into the footprints of the apostles and the fathers and founders of our Synod and bring sacrifices in order that Christ Crucified may be brought to others? The

command is still the same; the need of the world has not changed. There is still call for zeal in the cause of Christ. With God's aid and guidance I aim to show this as I speak to you on the following theme:—

*WHAT SHOULD INDUCE US TO BE VERY ZEALOUS IN  
THE CAUSE OF CHRIST?*

The answer is threefold:—

1. *The condition of the world;*
2. *The will of Christ;*
3. *The love of Christ.*

1.

The first thing, then, that should induce us to be very zealous in the cause of Christ is the condition of the world. The condition of the world is deplorable, indeed, most awful. The world is spiritually dead.

To be sure, this is not the world's verdict regarding itself. The world with its important discoveries, inventions, and seats of great learning does not look upon itself as being dead, but alive, yea, very much alive. It cannot judge otherwise; for its understanding has not been enlightened from on high. Those, however, whose understanding has been enlightened by the Word and Spirit of God know that the world is spiritually dead.

And, looking about us, do we not find this verdict of an enlightened understanding amply substantiated? In our own beloved country more than sixty millions are living and dying without Christ. Twenty-five million young men and women under the age of thirty are not in any way connected with the Christian Church; eight million children under ten years have not even been baptized. In Europe, battle-torn and bankrupt, conditions are, if anything, worse. Hatred of fellow-men has with many turned into hatred of God, and the altars of Jesus are forsaken. In China some four hundred millions are still in the clutches of Satan, worshiping their ancestors and idols; only a scant million has learned to say: Christ's crimson blood and righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress. In India only five millions know of Jesus, while over three hundred millions still bow before wood and stone and the lying prophet Mohammed. Ah, verily, penetrate the wildest wildernesses of Africa and South America, and wherever you find human life, you will also find death, spiritual death and depravity.

Now, at all times there have been men and women, even among the spiritually dead children of this world, who have had a vague consciousness that somehow all was not well with themselves and the world. What is more, they have hit upon all manner of schemes and ideas by means of which they thought the world might be made



better. Some said, Slavery is at fault; free the slaves, and all will be well. Others counseled, The people are ignorant; educate them, send them the writings of great poets and thinkers, — that will surely help them. That one means, however, which alone is able to resurrect the spiritually dead, they themselves knew not and hence could not recommend to others.

That one means is known to us, dear friends. It is the grace, the forgiveness, the life which Christ merited for all by His death on the cross. "He died for all," says the apostle. Yonder squalid savage of Africa and South America, whose creed is perpetual terror, and whose life is perpetual war, — Christ died for him. Yonder heathen of Asia who bows before serpents, wood, and stone, — Christ died for him. Those despairing millions of Europe and those careless millions of our own country, — Christ died for them. Those eight million tender children who hear Jesus' name only when uttered as a curse and blasphemy, — Christ died for them. Oh, tell this unto the world, and it will live; preach unto the peoples of this earth the name of Jesus, and the spiritually dead will become spiritually alive.

And now consider well both facts. First think of the condition of the world; a condition which darkens men's understanding, which maims body and soul; a condition so awful, so deplorable, that only the word death can fully describe it. And then think of the death of Jesus, which provides grace, forgiveness, hope, life, and salvation for a world spiritually dead, and I ask you, my friends, is not that inducement enough to make you very zealous in the cause of Christ? Ah, if temporal misery elicits sympathy and prompts to help; if the anxieties of a whole neighborhood are gathered about a drowning child or are fastened upon the rafter of a burning house, where alone, already scorched by the flame, stands a man, — I say, if such comparatively small misery elicits so much sympathy and help, how much more sympathy, how much more prayer, liberality, and zeal are then due the world lying in spiritual death.

And you will rejoice, friends, will you not, to-day and at all times, to take your stand beside the great apostle, to become very zealous in the cause of Christ, to uphold the various missions with all your might, and if men despise you and call you fools, to answer with Paul: "If we be beside ourselves, it is to God; and if we be sober, it is for your cause." Yea, it is the will of Christ that we should be very zealous in His cause, as we shall point out in our second part.

## 2.

Our text reads on: "Christ died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." Christ died for us, who by nature

were like all others, spiritually blind and dead; and by and through His death we have obtained new, spiritual life. This life we shall, however, not spend in our own service, but in the service of Him who gave it. There are scores of passages in Holy Writ which one could cite in proof of this assertion. I shall, however, refer you to only one. Rom. 12, 1 we find these words: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." Have you ever stopped to ponder these words? The Old Testament sacrifices were dedicated to God. If, then, we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice, the meaning evidently is that we should dedicate our whole life to His service; our strength and substance are to be consumed in His cause. We must not be selfish. Selfishness is a mighty tyrant and does much harm. It rules kingdoms; it declares wars; it keeps people away from church; it persuades parents to keep a gifted son out of the ministry; it makes us willing to spend a thousand for a car, but scarcely a dollar for the cause of His kingdom. Selfishness is indeed a great sin, and a sin against which Paul warns us in our text. We should not serve our own selves, but we are to serve Him who died for us and rose again—Christ Jesus, our Savior.

Those who live through and unto Christ cannot bear to see His altars forsaken, His name blasphemed, and His blood counted an unholy thing. Do you, my friends, belong to the small number who have received life through His death? Know, then, that He wants you to spend that life in His service, thankfully and joyfully to grasp at every opportunity to spread His kingdom. Think of the manifold blessings which have come to you by the atoning death of Jesus: deliverance from the curse of the Law; forgiveness of sins; the Holy Ghost as your Guide and Comforter; and the door of heaven opened for you. And when you have meditated upon all these things and the holy fire of gratitude burns within you, then remember that the world is lying in wickedness, that in your own country there are millions for whom Christ died, but who have never felt the power of His resurrection, and that in other lands there are many more millions who have never even heard His name. Indeed, in your own neighborhood there are children who have not been baptized and do not know the Savior who loves them so dearly and has shed His blood for them. He is waiting for me and for you to bring these thousands to Him. What are we going to do about it? He has granted us life, health, and happiness, above all, grace and forgiveness; He has blessed us with silver and gold,—what are we going to do about it? Shall He plead in vain? God grant that we may answer: No, He shall not plead in vain. We will make sacrifices; we will become zealous in His service; we will see that men are sent to them who will tell them of the Savior's love. Will it be



easy? It will not. Men will call you mad. But what do you care? You know you are doing your Savior's will, and therefore you join the apostle in saying: "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause."

### 3.

There is still another thing that should induce us to become very zealous in the cause of Christ, and that is the love of Christ. Paul says in our text: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ constrains, forces, or urges us on to become zealous in His cause, just as a favorable wind forces or carries the vessel into the quiet haven. Now, I am well aware of the fact that a great many uphold the cause of Jesus for other reasons. Some do so because they fear they would be evilly spoken of if they did not; others, from force of habit, or because they seek praise with men, etc. But those are not the reasons which should make us zealous in the cause of Christ. Nay, with us the chief reason, the reason of reasons, ever ought to be the love of Christ.

The *love of Christ*,—is it our love to Christ or Christ's love to us? We shall make no mistake if we take both meanings. If, then, there are such among us as need to be aroused to become zealous in the cause of Christ, let them think of the love of Christ to them. Think of the greatness of that love, of its purity, of its readiness to serve. In Europe great love manifested itself during the past awful years. Thousands and millions of young men died for love of country. And yet, how very insignificant is this love when compared with Christ's love to us! These men died because they had received much good within the borders of their country; Christ died for His enemies—for sinners, for you and me. Yea, herein does the greatness of God's love consist, not that we loved Him, but that He loved us and gave His only Son to die for us. Consider that love, a love which neither desertion nor ingratitude nor treachery could abate; a love which death could not destroy; a love which, to redeem creatures hateful and hating one another, took upon Himself the form of man, suffered want, embraced death, and shrank not from the terror of the grave. My friends, if we thoughtfully consider this love, do we then need any other incentive to make us very zealous in the cause of Christ?

And if we take these words to refer to your love for Christ, is not this in the heart of a Christian the proper motive for mission-work? The love of home, of friends, of rest, of travel, must ever be second to this deeper affection. O, then, let it be your love to Christ which makes you very zealous in His cause. If love of country makes millions willing to die; if love of learning can induce astronomers to travel thousands of miles just to see a passing star;

if love of knowledge can make men willing to forsake home and friends and penetrate great and dangerous wildernesses, just because they wish to gather new species of flowers or see and study animals they have never seen in their habitat, — how much more ought the love of Christ induce us to become zealous in His service! Let our flesh nag, let Satan scoff, and men ridicule, we know that Heaven applauds our zeal, and we vindicate our missionary zeal in the words of the apostle: "Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." Amen.

Beloit, Wis.

THEODORE GOHLKE.

## Orgelweihpredigt über Eph. 5, 19. 20.

In Christo Jesu, unserm hochgelobten Heilande, herzlichgeliebte  
Festgemeinde!

Ihr wollt heute eure Kirchenorgel, nachdem ihr sie habt reparieren und vergrößern lassen, aufs neue weihen, das heißt, sie vom gewöhnlichen Gebrauche, dem sonst Musikinstrumente dienen, absondern und sie dem Dienste des dreieinigen Gottes, zu seines großen Namens Ehre und zur Erbauung der Gemeinde, übergeben. Das geschieht mit Gottes Wort und Gebet. Ihr wollt heute aus Gottes Wort hören, ob der Gebrauch einer Orgel in euren Gottesdiensten dem Worte Gottes gemäß ist, und wie ihr eure Orgel recht gebrauchen sollt; ihr wollt aber heute auch den Herrn anrufen, daß er euch eure Orgel allein zur Verherrlichung seines Namens und zur Erbauung eurer Gemeinde dienen lasse. Denn Gottes Wort ist das rechte Heiligtum, das alle Dinge heilig macht, und das Gebet ist der Gottesdienst, da wir den wahren und lebendigen Gott im wahren Glauben durch unsern Mittler Jesum Christum um Erlangung der uns nötigen Güter anrufen und für die empfangenen Loben und danken. Ein solches Heiligtum und eine solche Gebetsermunterung ist auch das vom Heiligen Geiste eingegebene Wort des Apostels Paulus in unserm Texte: „Redet untereinander von Psalmen und Lobgesängen und geistlichen Liedern, singet und spielet dem Herrn in eurem Herzen und saget Dank allezeit für alles Gott und dem Vater in dem Namen unsers Herrn Jesu Christi!“ Auf Grund dieses Wortes laßt mich heute unter Gottes des Heiligen Geistes Gnadenbeistand zu euch reden:

Von dem rechten Gebrauch der Orgel in unsern Gottesdiensten  
und dabei die zwei Fragen beantworten:

1. Ist der Gebrauch der Orgel in unsern Gottesdiensten dem Worte Gottes gemäß?
2. Welches ist ihr rechter Gebrauch?



## 1.

Ist der Gebrauch der Orgel in unsern Gottesdiensten dem Worte Gottes gemäß? Allerdings; denn Paulus sagt in unserm Texte nicht nur: „Redet untereinander von Psalmen und Lobgesängen und geistlichen Liedern“, sondern er setzt auch hinzu: „Singet und spielt dem Herrn!“ Das Singen geschieht mit der menschlichen Stimme, das Spielen mit einem musikalischen Instrument. Gesang und Instrumentalmusik sind beide eine große, herrliche Gabe Gottes. Mit Recht sagt Luther: „Ich gebe nach der Theologie der Musica den nächsten Locum [das heißt, die nächste Stelle] und die höchste Ehre.“ Nichts auf Erden hat nächst dem Worte Gottes über die Gemüther der Menschen so große Gewalt und so großen Einfluß, um Traurige aufzurichten, Sichere zu erschrecken, Verzagte zu ermutigen, Hochmütige niederzubeugen, Aufgeregte zu beruhigen und Zornige zu besänftigen, als die Musik. Selbst der Heilige Geist ehrte sie und wirkte unter ihrem Gebrauch, wie an Elisa geschah. Als der König Joram von Israel und der König Josaphat von Juda und der König von Edom vereint gegen Mesa, den König der Moabiter, zu Felde zogen, kamen die drei verbündeten Könige zu dem Propheten Elisa, um durch ihn den Herrn zu beraten. Da ließ Elisa einen Spielmann kommen, unter dessen Saitenspiel die Hand des Herrn auf ihn kam. Durch Davids Gesang und Harfenspiel wurde der durch einen bösen Geist beunruhigte Saul erquickt. Das geschah freilich durch übernatürliche Wirkung Gottes; aber es bleibt doch gewiß, daß ein Trauriger durch ein geistliches Lied und liebliches Saitenspiel gerührt, beruhigt und fröhlich gemacht werden kann. Daher haben die Väter und Propheten nicht ohne Ursache gesucht, mit dem Worte Gottes nichts so nahe zu verbinden als die Musik.

Leider ist die Vokal- und Instrumentalmusik, wie es allen Gaben Gottes ergeht, dem schändlichsten Mißbrauch unterworfen. Die Welt hat die Psalmen und geistlichen Lieder, wo nicht in unzuchtige und Fleisch und Blut kitzelnde Gesänge, doch in ein Geplärre leichtsinnig verkehrt, und die Musikinstrumente werden öfter gerührt, wo es wüßt und toll zugeht und wo der Augenlust, der Fleischeslust und dem hoffärtigen Wesen gefrönt wird, als wo Lob und Dank Gottes erschallt. Daher haben sich je und je Bedenken gegen den Gebrauch der Orgel in der Kirche erhoben, weil selbst die Orgel zu weltlichen und sündlichen Belustigungen gemißbraucht wurde. Selbst in der römischen Kirche erhoben sich solche Bedenken. Seit dem achten Jahrhundert war in derselben die Orgel — damals noch ein schwerfälliges Instrument, das mit den Fäusten geschlagen wurde — mehr und mehr in Gebrauch gekommen. Aber im sechzehnten Jahrhundert hatte sie sich durch ihren Mißbrauch so viele Gegner zugezogen, daß auf dem Konzil zu Trient, wo die lutherische Bibellehre mit dem Bannfluch belegt wurde, ein stark unterstützter Antrag auf Entfernung der Orgel aus den Kirchen gestellt wurde, der aber durchfiel. Die Reformierten haben im Bildersturme auch die

Orgeln zertrümmert, und wenn auch einzelne Gemeinden unter ihnen sich bald wieder mit Orgeln versehen, so wurden sie in andern doch recht spät und werden sie in manchen auch jetzt nur allmählich eingeführt. In unserer lutherischen Kirche blieb der Gebrauch der Orgel von Anfang an unbestritten. Unserer lutherischen Kirche vornehmlich verdankt man die großartige Ausbildung dieses Instruments und der ihm eigentümlichen Kirchenmusik, worin Johann Sebastian Bach als unübertroffener und kaum erreichbarer Meister dasteht.

Mit Recht behält unsere liebe lutherische Kirche den Gebrauch der Orgel geradeso wie den Gebrauch des Altars und der Glocken bei. Der Mißbrauch hebt den rechten Gebrauch nicht auf. Man soll die Gaben Gottes um des Mißbrauches willen, den andere damit treiben, nicht wegwerfen oder zerstören, sonst könnte man überhaupt nichts mehr brauchen, was andere mißbrauchen. Man muß vielmehr die Herzen der Menschen durch Gottes Wort ändern, daß sie die Gaben Gottes recht brauchen. Überaus trefflich legt Luther diese Wahrheit dar. Das Gold, sagt er, ist fein und gut an sich selbst. Das Gold spricht nicht zu dir: Ich bin dein Gott, an den du dein Herz hängen sollst. Wenn es reden könnte, würde es vielmehr zu dir sagen: Ich bin dein Knecht, mit dem du nach Gottes Willen schalten und walten sollst. Es ist die Schuld des sündigen und verkehrten Menschenherzens, daß es Gold, Geld und Gut über alles liebt, daran hängt und also einen falschen Gott daraus macht. Sonne und Mond, die uns scheinen, haben noch niemals zu uns gesagt: Mache einen Gott aus mir und bete mich an; und dennoch hat es Leute gegeben, die Sonne und Mond angebetet haben. Sollten wir deshalb auf das Licht der Sonne und des Mondes verzichten? Nicht die Gaben Gottes sollen verändert und abgeschafft werden, sondern das böse Herz, das Mißbrauch mit Gottes Gaben treibt, soll verändert werden. Das gilt nun auch vom Gebrauch der Orgel. Gebraucht man sie, um die Herzen zu erheben und die Andacht im Gebet und im Gottesdienst zu erwecken, so ist das Gott wohlgefällig. Daher werden auch in unserer Kirche zum Organistendienst hierfür kirchlich ausgebildete Schullehrer, die als Gehilfen des Predigtamts an den Kindern berufen werden, angestellt. Auch dieser ihr Dienst an der Orgel ist wichtig und heilig.

In seiner Ermahnung, wie die Feiertage recht zu heiligen sind, spricht Gott im 81. Psalm zur alttestamentlichen Kirche: „Nehmet die Psalmen und gebet her die Pauken, liebliche Harfen mit Psalter! Blaset im Neumonden die Posaunen, in unserm Fest der Laubhütten! Denn solches ist eine Weise in Israel und ein Recht des Gottes Jakobs.“ Und in der Ermahnung zum Lobe Gottes im 150. Psalm heißt es: „Galliluja! Lobet den HERRN in seinem Heiligtum, lobet ihn in der Feste seiner Macht! Lobet ihn in seinen Thaten; lobet ihn in seiner großen Herrlichkeit! Lobet ihn mit Posaunen; lobet ihn mit Psalter und Harfen; lobet ihn mit Pauken und Reigen; lobet ihn mit Saiten und Pfeifen; lobet ihn mit hellen Zimbeln; lobet ihn mit wohlklingenden



Zimbeln! Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn! Halleluja!“ Als David den Gottesdienst herrlich bestellte, ordnete er viertausend Leviten als Lobfänger des Herrn mit Saitenspielen. Als Hiskias den rechten Gottesdienst zu Jerusalem wiederherstellte, da standen die Leviten mit den Saitenspielen Davids und die Priester mit den Drommeten. Und um die Zeit, da man anfang das Brandopfer, fing auch an der Gesang des Herrn und die Drommeten und auf mancherlei Saitenspiel Davids, des Königs Israels. Wozu nun Gott die Seinen im Alten Testament mit Bezug auf Musik in den Gottesdiensten auffordert, dazu fordert er seine Christen auch im Neuen Testament auf, nämlich nicht nur zu reden von Psalmen und Lobgesängen und geistlichen Liedern, sondern auch zu singen und zu spielen, wie unser Text sagt.

Und selbst in der reinen und sündlosen Herrlichkeit des Himmels erschallt der brausende Chor derer, die das ewig neue Lied von dem Lamm Gottes anstimmen, unter der Begleitung der Harfenspieler, die ihre Harfe spielen, wie Johannes im 14. Kapitel seiner Offenbarung schreibt.

So ist denn kein Zweifel, daß auch der Gebrauch der Orgel, die sich ganz besonders zur Begleitung des Gemeindegesanges eignet und die Töne vieler Musikinstrumente in sich vereinigt, in unsern Gottesdiensten dem Worte Gottes gemäß ist.

## 2.

Nun laßt uns zweitens noch hören, welches der rechte Gebrauch der Orgel ist, unter deren Führung und Begleitung wir unsere Kirchengesänge anstimmen. Mit großem Nachdruck betont der Apostel hierbei das Herz. „Singet und spielet dem Herrn in eurem Herzen!“ Im 3. Kapitel seines Briefes an die Kolosser wiederholt er: „Singet dem Herrn in eurem Herzen!“ Das Herz muß dessen voll sein, wessen der Mund übergeheth. Ein bloßes Mundgeplärre, bei dem das Herz nicht von der Liebe Gottes in Christo Jesu entzündet ist, gefällt Gott nicht. Da sagt Gott vielmehr durch den Propheten Amos: „Du nur weg von mir das Geplärre deiner Lippen; denn ich mag deines Psalterspiels nicht hören!“ Wir müssen mit Maria sprechen: „Meine Seele erhebet den Herrn.“ Aus der Seele muß die Andacht kommen. Darum sagt der Apostel vor unserm Text: „Werdet voll Geistes!“ Die Zunge, die den Gesang anstimmt, ist nur wie ein Glöcklein; wenn dessen Seil nicht vom Glauben in den Herzen gezogen wird, so wird es ein Klang, der in Heulen verkehrt werden soll, wie abermals Amos im 8. Kapitel sagt. Die Lieder der Kirche sind Gebete, die das Volk Gottes vor den Herrn bringt, und wer sie gedankenlos und glaubenslos singt, von dem gilt das Wort, das der Herr über die Heuchler aussprach: „Dies Volk nahet sich zu mir mit seinem Munde und ehret mich mit seinen Lippen, aber ihr Herz ist ferne von mir.“

Wie wird man aber voll des Heiligen Geistes? Das geschieht allein durch das süße und gnadenreiche Evangelium, worin der Heilige

Geist den armen, von der Forderung und dem Fluche des feurigen göttlichen Gesetzes ausgedorrten und nach Vergebung der Sünden hungerrigen und durstigen Sündern den Heiland vormalt und sein allerheiligstes und vollkommenes Verdienst anbietet und darreicht. In diesem Worte der Gnade erkennen sie durch Erleuchtung des Heiligen Geistes, daß der Herr Christus, der menschengewordene Gottessohn, im Gericht Gottes durch sein Blut und Tod auch ihre Schuld bezahlt, auch ihre Strafe getragen, auch ihre Missethat gebüßt, den Zorn Gottes auch wider sie gestillt und gesühnt, auch sie von der Herrschaft der Sünde, des Todes und des Teufels erlöst, auch ihnen Vergebung der Sünden, Gerechtigkeit und das ewige Leben erworben hat, kurz, daß er um ihrer Sünde willen dahingegeben, aber auch um ihrer Gerechtigkeit willen auferweckt worden ist. Da kann es gar nicht anders sein, als daß solche durstige Seelen durch die Gnade des Heiligen Geistes und durch dies sein Evangelium zum lebendigen Glauben an ihren Herrn und Heiland gelangen und dadurch der Vergebung der Sünden und des ewigen Lebens fröhlich gewiß werden. Da macht denn auch der Heilige Geist selbst Wohnung in ihrem Herzen und erfüllt sie so gnadenreich, daß ein heiliger Freudenrausch über sie kommt, der ausbricht in einen Strom des Lobes und Dankes gegen Gott und in heilige Lobgesänge für seine unaussprechliche Gnade.

Aber auch denen, die bereits gläubige Christen sind, ist es nötig, daß sie immer mehr voll Geistes werden. Das geschieht, wenn sie immer mehr aus dem Heilsbrunnen Christi, dessen Worte Geist und Leben sind, Gnade schöpfen, dadurch den Glauben an ihren Herrn und Heiland stärken und in seiner seligmachenden Erkenntnis wachsen. Nur so werden sie immer tüchtiger, den Glauben durch die Liebe zu erweisen und ihn auch unter dem Kreuze in der Geduld zu erzeigen. Nur so werden sie gestärkt, wider den Teufel, Welt und Fleisch kraft des göttlichen Wortes den guten Kampf des Glaubens zu kämpfen, durch den Geist des Fleisches Geschäfte zu töten, der Sünde abzusterben und der Gerechtigkeit zu leben. Nur so finden sie ihre Lust daran, nicht nur in ihrer Kirche, sondern auch in ihren Häusern sich gegenseitig zu ermuntern und zu erquickern, theils durch die herrlichen Dank- und Lobpsalmen sowie durch andere Lobgesänge, die sich in der Schrift finden, theils durch geistliche Lieder, deren unsere liebe lutherische Kirche eine so große Fülle hat.

Vor allem werden ihre Lieder ausklingen im „Dankfagen“, wovon der Apostel in unserm Texte sagt, daß es „allezeit und für alles“ geschehen soll. Denn sie erkennen nun von Herzensgrund, wie Gott sie nicht nur mit leiblichen Wohlthaten überschüttet, sondern ihnen auch unaufhörlich die geistlichen Wohlthaten durch sein Wort und seinen Geist zufließen läßt. „Für alles“ danken sie; denn auch die Trübsale sind für die Gläubigen nur väterliche Züchtigungen, um sie im Glauben, in ernster Beherrschung der Heiligen Schrift, im Dulden und Beten zu üben,



den alten Menschen immer mehr zu töten, den neuen immer mehr zu stärken und sie endlich ewig heilig, selig und herrlich zu machen.

Wo es so im Herzen steht, da wird man auch im Gottesdienst die Orgel recht gebrauchen; da wird man nicht eine Orgel anschaffen, lediglich um Musik zu haben, die die Ohren kitzelt; da wird man ihr nicht gedankenlos nachsingen, sondern mit Andacht von Herzensgrund in den Orgelklang einstimmen. Da werden die Bußlieder aus einem seufzenden, zerشلagenen Herzen, die Glaubenslieder aus einem gewissen, freudigen Herzen, die Kreuz- und Trostlieder aus einem gottergebenen Herzen, die Lob- und Danklieder aus einem wahrhaft dankbaren Herzen hervorquellen. Da wird die liebliche Vereinigung von Orgelklang und Gemeindegesang ein Vorspiel der Freude und Wonne im Himmel sein; denn da ertönt der Gesang aus solchen Herzen, die sich der Himmels-herrlichkeit versichert wissen und daher glauben, bekennen und jubilieren:

Wenn dann zuletzt ich angelangt bin  
Im schönen Paradies,  
Von höchster Freud' erfüllet wird der Sinn,  
Der Mund von Lob und Preis.  
Das Halleluja reine  
Singt man in Heiligkeit,  
Das Hosanna feine  
Ohn' End' in Ewigkeit.

Mit Jubelklang, mit Instrumenten schön,  
Auf Hören ohne Zahl,  
Daß von dem Klang und von dem süßen Ton  
Erbebt der FreudenSaal;  
Mit hunderttausend Zungen,  
Mit Stimmen noch viel mehr,  
Wie von Anfang gesungen  
Das himmlische Heer.

Amen.

P. R ö f e n e r.

## Dispositionen über die neue epistolische Perikopenreihe der Synodalkonferenz.

### Sechzehnter Sonntag nach Trinitatis.

1 Joh. 3, 1—9.

„Meine Lieben!“ so redet der Apostel seine Zuhörer an, W. 2. „Meine Lieben!“ so spreche ich auch zu euch. Ihr seid mir alle lieb. Als ich vor einer Reihe von Jahren zu euch kam, hatte ich euch lieb als meine Glaubensgenossen und die mir von Gott anvertrauten Schäflein. Seit jener Zeit ist das Band der Liebe nur immer inniger geworden. Ich habe viel Liebe und Gutes von euch erfahren. Nun möchte ich, daß ihr alle auch recht von Herzen glücklich seid. Sollte nicht die Botschaft, die ich euch heute bringe, euch von Herzen glücklich machen? Hört und staunt: Ihr seid Gottes Kinder!

**Wir sind nun Gottes Kinder.**

Wir sehen,

1. was das in sich schließt,
2. wozu es uns verpflichtet.

## 1.

„Wir“, das sind die Gläubigen, nur die Gläubigen. Von allen andern gilt: „Ihr seid von dem Vater, dem Teufel.“ Den Teufel zum Vater haben, wie traurig! Noch steht aber der Weg zur Kinderschaft Gottes allen Menschen offen. Was wollte Gott lieber, als daß alle Menschen ihn von Herzen Vater nannten! Sollte jemand noch kein Kind Gottes sein, so kann er noch eins werden. Er wende sich zu ihm!

„Nun.“ „Wir sind nun Gottes Kinder.“ Es war nicht immer so. Ursprünglich waren auch wir keine Kinder Gottes. Wir kamen nicht als Kinder Gottes auf die Welt, sondern waren von Natur Kinder des Zorns, gleichwie auch die andern. Wie sind wir Kinder Gottes geworden? Nicht aus uns selbst. Ein Kind kann sich nicht selbst ins Dasein rufen. Kinder Gottes sind wir geworden durch die Wiedergeburt. B. 9: „Wer aus Gott geboren ist.“ „Von Gott geboren“, Joh. 1, 13. Darum ist er unser rechter Vater und wir seine rechten Kinder. Ein Kind Gottes wird man durch den Glauben an Jesum. „Ihr seid alle Gottes Kinder durch den Glauben an Christum Jesum“, Gal. 3, 26. „Wie viele ihn aber aufnahmen, denen gab er Macht, Gottes Kinder zu werden, die an seinen Namen glauben“, Joh. 1, 12.

„Sehet, welch eine Liebe hat uns der Vater erzeiget, daß wir Gottes Kinder sollen heißen!“ B. 1. (Lied 183, 1.) Aus Liebe hat der Vater seinen Sohn, sein Bestes, hergegeben, daß wir seine Kinder werden sollten. Aus Liebe kommt der Sohn in die Welt und hat uns durch Leiden und Sterben erlöst, „daß wir die Kinderschaft empfangen“, Gal. 4, 5. Nun hat uns Gott als seine Kinder adoptiert. Pharaos Tochter ging aus und fand ein kleines Knäblein im Schilf, eins der verachteten Hebräerkindlein, das nach des Königs Gebot des Todes war. Sein Elend ging ihr zu Herzen. Sie nahm es zu sich, und es wurde am königlichen Hofe großgezogen. Gott sah uns in unserer Armut, in unserm Blute liegen, hat sich unser erbarmt und uns als seine Kinder aufgenommen. „Er hat uns verordnet zur Kinderschaft gegen ihn selbst“, Eph. 1, 5. Welch eine Liebe! „Sehet“, tut eure Augen auf und schaut das Wunder und Geheimnis!

„Wir sind nun Gottes Kinder.“ Es sieht oft gar nicht danach aus. Wenn ein Kind einen reichen Vater hat, dann kann man das dem Kinde ansehen, z. B. an der Kleidung, die es trägt, daß es in einem feinen Hause wohnt usw. Man sollte meinen, wenn wir Gott zum Vater haben, den ewig reichen Gott, dann sollten wir auf Erden große Schätze, lauter Glück und gute Tage haben, frei sein von aller Not, von jedermann geachtet und angesehen werden. Aber nein,



das Gegenteil ist oft der Fall. Von unserer Kindschaft ist noch viel verborgen.

„Es ist noch nicht erschienen, was wir sein werden“, B. 2. Unser zukünftiger herrlicher Zustand der Kindschaft ist noch verborgen. Das Erbteil, die Stätte, der Gnadenlohn ist bereitet, aber noch unsichtbar, verdeckt wie eine köstliche Perle im Sande. „Ein jeglicher, der solche Hoffnung hat“, B. 3. Wir haben eine Hoffnung.

Weil es aber noch nicht erschienen ist, was wir sein werden, kommen Anfechtungen von innen und außen. „Darum kennt euch die Welt nicht, denn sie kennt ihn nicht“, B. 1. Sie erkennt uns nicht als Gottes Kinder, schließt keine Freundschaft mit uns und läßt uns oft mancherlei leiden. Wir selbst werden manchmal von unserm Fleisch angefochten. Es sieht gar nicht danach aus, als ob wir Kinder Gottes wären. Man fühlt und empfindet oft so wenig davon. Die Vernunft spricht dagegen. Der Teufel, der einst zu Christo sprach: „Bist du Gottes Sohn“ usw., spricht auch zu uns: Bist du ein Kind Gottes? Es sieht nicht danach aus. Wärest du Gottes Kind, dann hätte er dich nicht in so große Not kommen lassen. Da müssen wir dann die Dokumente und Papiere wieder nachsehen. Was steht darin?

„Wir sind nun Gottes Kinder.“ „Ich bin ja doch dein liebes Kind trotz Teufel, Welt und aller Sünd.“ „Ich glaub', was Christi Wort verspricht, ich fühl' es oder fühl' es nicht.“ Und unser Herz geht wieder in Sprüngen und kann nicht traurig sein. Und welch eine Herrlichkeit und Seligkeit tut sich uns da auf!

Kinder Gottes. Gott ist unser Vater. „Vater unser.“ Wie glücklich ein Kind, das einen guten Vater hat! Es sorgt nicht: Was werden wir essen? „Erorget für uns, hüt' und wacht.“ Ps. 103, 13: „Wie sich ein Vater über Kinder erbarmet“ usw. Röm. 8, 15: „Ihr habt nicht einen knechtlichen Geist empfangen.“ Ein Kind braucht sich vor seinem Vater nicht zu fürchten. Es mag blitzen und donnern, stürmen und toben, keine Angst, keine Furcht vor Gott! Selbst wenn der Vater manchmal schlägt, alles Kreuz und Trübsal dient uns zum besten. „Es ist herzlich gut gemeint mit der Christen Plagen.“ „Bin ich denn nun Gottes Kind, warum sollt' ich fliehen, wenn er mich von meiner Sünd' auf was Gut's will ziehen?“ (Lied 370. 10. 9.) — Kinder haben auch Rechte. Sie können dem Vater alles sagen, was sie auf dem Herzen haben. Der Zugang zum Vater steht ihnen immer offen. „Alle eure Sorge werfet auf ihn!“ Alle deine Anliegen schüttele vor ihm aus. — Kinder bekommen auch die Erbschaft, alles, was der Vater hat und besitzt. „Sind wir Kinder, so sind wir auch Erben“, Röm. 8, 17; Gal. 4, 7. Die größte Erbschaft ist der Himmel. Da wird unsere Herrlichkeit offenbar. „Wenn es erscheinen wird“, B. 2. Dann wird unser „Hoffen“ übergehen in Schauen. „Wir werden ihn sehen“, B. 2. Die Kinder werden um ihren Vater versammelt werden und ihn schauen. „Ich werde in meinem Fleische Gott sehen“,

Hiob 19, 26. „Ich will schauen dein Antlitz in Gerechtigkeit“, Ps. 17, 15. Wir werden ihn sehen, wie er ist“, in seiner Herrlichkeit. „Wir sehen jetzt durch einen Spiegel in einem dunklen Wort, dann aber von Angesicht zu Angesicht“, 1 Kor. 13, 12. „Daß sie meine Herrlichkeit sehen, die du mir gegeben hast“, Joh. 17, 24. „O wann werd' ich dahin kommen, daß ich einst mit allen Frommen schau' dein holdes Angesicht?“ — Wir werden ihm gleich sein, B. 2; nicht gleich in seinen göttlichen Eigenschaften, in seiner Allmacht usw., aber gleich im ungetrübten Genuß der Seligkeit. Wir werden gerecht und selig sein wie Gott. Wir tragen das Bild des Himmlischen. Das Ebenbild Gottes wird vollkommen wiederhergestellt sein. Alle Leiden dieser Zeit sind nicht wert der Herrlichkeit, die usw. — O es ist etwas Großes, das Kind eines Reichen zu sein! Kein Wunsch bleibt unerfüllt. Wir werden alles haben, was unser Herz begehrt. Wenn ein Mensch die ganze Welt besäße, wäre aber kein Kind Gottes, so wäre er dennoch arm und elend. Der Apostel sagt: „Wir wissen“, B. 2. Wir haben das nicht aus uns selbst, sondern aus dem Testament, aus der Schrift.

## 2.

Wir sind Kinder Gottes. Laßt uns auch sehen, wozu uns das verpflichtet. Wir sollen nun auch als Kinder Gottes leben. Gute Kinder tun alles, was der Vater will und gern hat. Was der Vater nicht will, das tun sie nicht. Sie tun nichts Böses, machen dem Vater keine Schande. So ist es mit den Kindern Gottes. B. 3: „Ein jeglicher, der solche Hoffnung hat, der reiniget sich.“ Lied 282, 2: „Reinigt euch von euren Lüsten!“ B. 6: „Wer in ihm bleibet, der sündigt nicht.“ B. 9: „Wer aus Gott geboren ist, der tut nicht Sünde . . . und kann nicht sündigen.“ Daß der Apostel einen Unterschied macht zwischen Schwachheits- und Bosheitsünden, geht aus Kap. 2, 1 hervor: „auf daß ihr nicht sündigt. . . Und ob jemand sündigt“ usw. Auch Christen sündigen noch, aber nicht mutwillig, sondern aus Schwachheit. Wenn Johannes sagt: „Er tut nicht Sünde“, so will er nicht sagen, daß der Christ vollkommene Heiligung erreicht. Wir haben die alte sündliche Natur noch an uns und straucheln und fallen gar oft. Aber wir führen kein Sündenleben.

Einige nackte Tatsachen: „Wer Sünde tut, der tut auch Unrecht; und die Sünde ist das Unrecht“, B. 4. Unrecht — gegen Gottes Willen und Gebot. Wer Sünde tut, stellt sich in Gegensatz zum Vater, tut, was er haßt.

„Wer Sünde tut, der ist vom Teufel; denn der Teufel sündigt von Anfang“, B. 8. Er hat die erste Sünde getan und verführt nun die Menschen und macht sie zu Sklaven der Sünde. Wer Sünde tut, hat den Teufel zum Vater, Joh. 8, 44. „Wer da sündigt, der hat ihn nicht gesehen noch erkannt“, B. 6. Wer mutwillig sündigt, zeigt damit deutlich, daß er Gott noch nicht erkannt, nicht im Glauben ergriffen hat.



„Wer aus Gott geboren ist, der tut nicht Sünde“, B. 9. Die Wiedergeburt findet statt durchs Evangelium. Wenn sie geschehen ist, kann der Mensch nicht mehr im alten Lasterleben weiterleben. Es ver- trägt sich nicht mit Glauben und Christentum.

„Wer in ihm bleibt, der sündigt nicht“, B. 6. Durch den Glauben haben wir Gemeinschaft mit Gott. Wer mutwillig sündigt, der bleibt nicht in ihm und sagt sich los von der Gemeinschaft mit Christo.

Beweggründe für die Kinder Gottes, daß sie als Kinder Gottes leben. B. 5: „Er ist erschienen, auf daß er unsere Sünden wegnehme.“ Christus ist in die Welt gekommen, unsere Sünden wegzunehmen. Das hat er getan, und sein Opfer ist darum von so großem Wert, weil „in ihm keine Sünde ist“, B. 5. Durch solches Opfer hat er unsere Sünde getilgt. Wie könnte es ein Kind Gottes nun fertigbringen, sich wieder mutwillig in Sünden zu wälzen? Das Evangelium gibt Kraft und züchtigt uns, daß wir gerecht und gottselig leben in dieser Welt. — „Dazu ist erschienen der Sohn Gottes, daß er die Werke des Teufels zerstöre“, B. 8. Sünden sind Werke des Teufels. Christus hat uns erlöst von der Gewalt des Teufels und von der Herrschaft der Sünde. Wie könnte ein Kind Gottes sich wieder mutwillig unter die Gewalt des Teufels begeben? — Dazu sollte auch Dankbarkeit uns treiben. Sollte ein Kind, das auf der Straße aufgelesen und aus Elend und Schmutz in ein schönes Haus als Glied der Familie aufgenommen worden ist, nicht aus Dankbarkeit seinem Wohltäter zu Gefallen leben? Wie soll ich dem Herrn vergelten alle Wohltaten, die er an mir tut? — Dazu haben wir auch das Vorbild Gottes. „Er reiniget sich, gleichwie auch er rein ist“, B. 3. Gott ist rein. Kinder sind ihrem Vater ähnlich und folgen ihm nach. Sie trachten danach, von den anlebenden Sün- den immer mehr rein zu werden. „Wer recht tut, der ist gerecht, gleich- wie er gerecht ist“, B. 7. So jagen auch die Kinder der Gerechtigkeit und Heiligkeit nach. Und dazu kommt dann noch die Hoffnung auf die Erbschaft, die das neue Leben stärkt.

„Kindlein, laffet euch niemand verführen!“ B. 7. „Kindlein“, sagt der Apostel. Christen sind wie schwache Kinder und lassen sich leicht betören und verführen. Es sind allerlei Mächte, die uns verführen wollen. Das eigene Fleisch reizt, andere Menschen locken, Satan treibt beständig. Aber laßt euch nicht verführen! Wer mutwillig sündigt und sich einbildet, er sei ein Christ, betrügt sich selbst. Böse Kinder, die dem Vater entlaufen und bloß noch dem Namen nach Kinder sind, werden schließlich enterbt.

Laßt uns heimgehen und uns der Kindschaft Gottes freuen! Wir sind nun Gottes Kinder. Darum gilt Lied 370, 11. 12. E. E.

**Achtzehnter Sonntag nach Trinitatis.**

2 Thess. 3, 1—5.

Christen sind Beter. Der Pulsschlag des Herzensglaubens ist das Gebet. Nicht nur um leibliche Güter bittet ein Christ, sondern auch, und zwar vornehmlich, um geistliche Gaben und Güter. Er betet nicht nur für sich, sondern auch für andere, sonderlich für die Ausbreitung des Wortes Gottes, Rf. 122, 6—9. Ein schönes Gebet dieser Art finden wir in unserm Text.

**Unser Gebet, daß das Wort des HErrn laufe und gepriesen werde.**

Damit bitten wir

1. um den Erfolg des Wortes Gottes an andern Orten,
2. um das fernere Gedeihen des Wortes Gottes unter uns.

**1.**

a. B. 1. 2. Paulus bittet die Thessalonicher, daß sie für ihn und seine Mitarbeiter beten sollen. Aber er bittet nichts für sich, sondern ausschließlich um den Erfolg des Wortes Gottes. Als Diener Gottes, Boten des Evangeliums, kommen Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter in Betracht. Die Christen zu Thessalonich sollten für diese Prediger des Neuen Testaments beten, daß nämlich durch dieser Männer Dienst am Evangelium das Wort des HErrn, das Wort von Christo, unserm HErrn und Heiland, und von der Erlösung durch Christi Blut und Tod, laufe, schnellen Fortgang habe, und zwar an allen Orten, damit Christi Reich gebaut, des Satans Reich zerstört, der Name Christi gepriesen und Seelen für den Himmel gewonnen würden. Paulus weiß von keinem andern Mittel zum Aufbau des Reiches Gottes als von dem Wort des HErrn, dem Evangelium. Und es gibt auch heute kein anderes Mittel, wodurch die Arbeit im Weinberg des HErrn erfolgreich betrieben werden könnte, als das alte, aber doch immer neue Evangelium von der Vergebung der Sünden in Jesu Namen. Eph. 2, 17; 1 Kor. 4, 15; Röm. 1, 16; Luf. 24, 46. 47; Matth. 16, 15. 16; Apof. 2, 37. Wollen wir ein Gebet tun für Gottes Reich, zur Rettung der Seelen, dann sollen wir nicht bitten um mehr weltliche Unterhaltung in der Kirche usw., sondern daß Gottes Wort, das Evangelium, rein und lauter von immer mehr Pastoren, Missionaren und Lehrern an immer mehr Orten gepredigt und gelehrt werde in Kirche, Haus und Schule. überall sehen wir ja den Ruin, den die Sünde bringt. Soll auf dieser verfluchten Erde der Garten Gottes in Blüte bleiben und seine Grenzen sich immer weiter erstrecken, dann müssen wir Christen Gott um den Erfolg des Evangeliums ansehn. Beten wir fleißig zum HErrn der Ernte, daß er immer mehr Arbeiter sende in seine Ernte, und die er gesandt hat, möge er mit Weisheit, Kraft und Stärke, Mut und Standhaftigkeit be-



gaben, daß durch ihren Dienst immer mehr Seelen errettet werden aus der Obrigkeit der Finsternis und versetzt werden in das Reich des Sohnes Gottes.

Und wir bitten nicht nur um äußerliche Ausbreitung. „Gepreiset werde“ durch Herzensglauben, der sich in der That äußert. Gottes Wort soll gepriesen werden durch die Frucht eines neuen Lebens. Wir bitten, daß das Evangelium die Menschen durch den Glauben ganz erneuere, ihnen ein neues Herz, neuen Sinn, neuen Charakter, neue Lebensanschauung gebe und also ihr ganzes Leben, ihr Heim, ihr Geschäft neu gestaltet werde dem Worte Gottes zum Preise und Christo zu Ehren.

b. Was soll uns nun willig machen zu diesem Gebet? Unsere Dankbarkeit für den Erfolg des Wortes Gottes unter uns: „wie bei euch“. Die Christen zu Thessalonich sollten bedenken, was Gott durch das Evangelium an ihnen getan hatte, 1 Thess. 1, 3—2, 12; 2 Thess. 1, 3. 4. Ehe Paulus zu ihnen kam, waren sie ohne Gott und ohne Hoffnung in der Welt. Ohne ihr Verdienst war das Wort Gottes zu ihnen gekommen. Ohne ihr Zutun und Verdienst hatte das Wort Gottes unter ihnen Frucht geschafft. Alles war Gottes Gnade. Wie glücklich und selig waren sie nun geworden! So mußten sie doch wünschen, daß dieselbe Gnade auch andern armen Sündern zuteil werde, Interesse zeigen an dem Seelenheil anderer und beten für die Ausbreitung und den Erfolg des Evangeliums.

Ferner soll uns zu diesem Gebet treiben die Opposition, die das Evangelium erfährt, B. 2. Gottes Wort stößt immer auf Widerspruch. Satan schläft nicht. Er baut seine Kapelle hart neben Gottes Tempel. Die Ungläubigen sind seine Helfershelfer. „Der Glaube ist nicht jedermanns Ding.“ Viele widersetzen sich dem Werk des Heiligen Geistes an ihrem Herzen, wollen mit aller List und Macht den Lauf des Wortes hindern, verfolgen die Diener Gottes und verbreiten allerlei falsche Lehre. Und heute? — Und eben weil Gottes Wort so viel Widerspruch erfährt und die wahren Prediger des Evangeliums gehaßt und allerorts angefeindet werden, darum sollen die Christen fleißig und inbrünstig bitten um den Erfolg des Evangeliums. (Ried 165, 3b—7.)

## 2.

a. Unser Gebet für die Ausbreitung des Wortes Gottes schließt auch die Bitte um das fernere Gedeihen des Wortes Gottes unter uns ein. Unsere Erhaltung im Glauben und unser Wachstum im Christentum ist nicht unser Werk, B. 3—5. Siehe auch Kap. 2, 16. 17; 1, 11. 12; 1 Thess. 5, 8—11; 4, 1; 2, 14. 15. Paulus hat seine Thessalonicher von Herzen lieb, 1 Thess. 2, 17—20. Er weiß die Gefahr, in der sie stehen. Aber er verzagt nicht. Er nimmt seine Zuflucht zu Gott im Gebet. Er bittet den treuen Gott, er wolle seine Christen bewahren vor dem übel und sie im Glauben und in allem guten Werk festhalten bis ans Ende. — Wir sehen, auch wir, die wir Christen sind, haben das Gebet nötig,

daß Gottes Wort unter uns ferner gedeihe. Die Zeiten sind böse, sehr böse. Es wird immer schwerer, nicht nur ein Christ zu heißen, sondern auch wirklich zu sein, 2 Tim. 3, 12. Doch wir richten unser Haupt empor zu Gott, der ewig treu ist. Er hat uns verheißen, daß er uns stärken, befestigen wolle im wahren Glauben und im gottseligen Leben bis ans Ende, 1 Kor. 1, 8, 9; 10, 13. Er wird uns bewahren vor dem Übel, so daß der Teufel, die Welt und unser Fleisch uns nicht betrüge noch verführe in Mißglauben, Versuchung und andere große Schande und Laster. Der treue Gott ist der allmächtige Herr. Er kann uns stärken, daß wir tun und in Zukunft tun werden, was Gott uns in seinem Wort gebietet. Standhaftigkeit im Glauben, Fortschritt in der Heiligung, Reichthum an guten Werken kommt vom Herrn Jesu. Darum gilt es fleißig beten, 1 Theß. 5, 23, 24; Hebr. 13, 20, 21.

b. Doch das Gedeihen des Wortes reicht Gott gerade durchs Wort dar, V. 4 („was wir euch gebieten“). Gott erhalte uns sein Wort und erhalte in uns wahre Liebe zu seinem Worte! Dann geht V. 5 in Erfüllung. Das Wort richtet unsere Herzen zu der Liebe Gottes, Joh. 3, 16; Röm. 5, 8; 8, 31, 32. Wenn wir die Liebe Gottes gegen uns unwürdige Sünder erwägen, dann entbrennt in uns das Feuer der Liebe gegen Gott, und wir empfangen Willigkeit, auszuharren im Kampf des Glaubens, und auch Kraft, um Christi willen zu leiden. Und der Apostel bittet, daß der Herr unsere Herzen auch richte zu der Geduld Christi, damit wir nachfolgen seinen Fußtapfen, 1 Petr. 2, 21; Jes. 53, 7; Hebr. 11; 10, 36; 12, 1; 6, 11, 12. (Lied 282, 4.) W. E. G.

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## Entwurf zu einer Reformationsfestpredigt.

4 Mos. 14, 3b.

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Entscheidungsstunden im menschlichen Leben: Soll ich auf dieser Bahn weitergehen, oder ist die Zeit gekommen, einen andern Weg einzuschlagen? Vorwärtsgen bringt oft Arbeit und Gefahr; umkehren, einen andern Weg einschlagen, mag leichter sein, aber führt oft nicht zum Ziel.

Wir denken an

### Drei Entscheidungsstunden:

1. Israel in der Wüste,      2. Luther in Worms,
3. die Kirche in unserer Zeit.

#### 1.

Gott hatte Israel aus dem Diensthaufe Ägyptens geführt und wollte sie in das Land Kanaan bringen. Israel sendet Kundschafter aus, um das Land kennen zu lernen. Die berichten von den herrlichen Früchten des Landes, aber auch von den Riesen. Israel hört nur das eine: den Bericht über die Riesen. Voller Angst, und Gottes Ver-



heißung vergessend, sagt das Volk: „Ist's nicht besser, wir ziehen wieder in Ägypten?“ Vorwärtsgen hieß, sich Mühe und Gefahr unterziehen; durch einen Rückzug könnten sie dem entgehen. Aber Gott gab ihnen, obwohl sie erst wankten, die rechte Entscheidung. Und so kam das Volk schließlich doch in das Gelobte Land.

## 2.

Luther hatte nach und nach erkannt, daß das Papsttum das Reich des Antichristen sei. Immer klarer wurde sein Zeugnis, immer drohender die Antworten des Papstes. Schließlich kam die Bannbulle, und Luther verbrannte sie. Dann kam das Jahr 1521 und der Reichstag zu Worms. Er wurde aufgefordert, seine Lehre zu widerrufen. Da stand er vor seiner großen Entscheidung. Vorwärtsgen in seinem Werk, in seinem Kampfe gegen den Papst, würde Gefahr bringen. Er dachte an Flucht usw. Zurückgehen, widerrufen, wäre leichter; aber was wären die Folgen? Für Luther vielleicht eine Ehrenstellung, für die Kirche aber eine Niederlage. Doch wie einst dem Volke Israel, so half Gott hier Luther, die rechte Entscheidung zu treffen: „Es sei denn, daß ich mit klaren Worten“ usw.

## 3.

Das ist vor etwas mehr als vierhundert Jahren geschehen. Und heute, in unserer Zeit, steht die Kirche, unsere lutherische Kirche, auch vor einer großen Entscheidung: Sollen wir auf der Bahn weitergehen, die unsere Väter vor uns und wir bisher betreten haben, oder ist die Zeit gekommen, einen andern Weg einzuschlagen? Wollen wir noch Christen bleiben? Die Welt will den einfachen Christenglauben nicht mehr. Sie will auch nicht christlich leben. Was wollen wir? Weitergehen bringt Spott, Verfolgung usw. Kehren wir um, so haben wir die Weltkinder zu Freunden. Wollen wir noch Lutheraner bleiben und den Grundsätzen unserer Kirche treu bleiben? Oder ist die Zeit gekommen, unsere lutherischen Grundsätze fallen zu lassen? (Unionismus, Loge usw.) Ist's nicht besser, wir ziehen wieder zurück? Dann mögen wir mancher Gefahr entgehen, manchem Spott aus dem Wege gehen. Doch wie böse wären die Folgen! — Gott gebe uns, wie einst Israel und Luther, die rechte Entscheidung!

J. r. N i e d n e r.

# Outlines on the First Series of Gospel-Lessons Chosen by the Synodical Conference.

## Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

MATT. 22, 23—33.

In the days of Christ there were three prominent religious sects among the Jews: the *Pharisees* (the “orthodox” party, having a scrupulous regard for tradition and for the observance of the ex-

ternal forms of the Law), the *Sadducees* (the rationalistic party, being rationalists in theory and Epicureans in practise), the *Essenes* (the mystical party, mysticism and asceticism being their outstanding features).—Our text tells us that Jesus was encountered by the Sadducees, “which say that there is no resurrection,” v. 23, and which deny the existence of angels and of spirits, Acts 23, 8. The Sadducees put a question to Jesus with regard to the resurrection of the body and therewith tried to ensnare Him. He answered them: “*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.*” V. 29. For the same reasons many in our day err. This question and its answer, therefore, shall engage our attention:—

### WHY DO MANY ERR?

1. *Because they know not the Scriptures;*
2. *Because they know not the power of God.*

#### 1.

a. *Many, like the Sadducees, misrepresent the doctrines of the Christian religion.* The question of the Sadducees implied that the same relation between husband and wife which exists here on earth would continue in heaven. Vv. 24—28. The conclusion which the Sadducees drew from *their* presentation of the doctrine of resurrection was that the woman could not in the resurrection be the wife of all seven husbands, and that, therefore, the resurrection was an impossibility. In this way the Sadducees sought to ridicule the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. The Sadducees, however, misrepresented this doctrine. The Bible nowhere says, nor did the Christian Church teach, that the earthly relations of marriage would continue in heaven, because “in the resurrection,” as Jesus told the Sadducees, “they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” V. 30. In heaven there will be no marriage relations, because there will be no need for such; there will be no births, no deaths, no temptations of the flesh, 1 Cor. 7, 2.

Many to-day, like unto the Sadducees, *misrepresent* Christian doctrines. Some say that the doctrine of salvation *by grace alone* gives man a license to sin; that the doctrine of the election of those who are saved implies the election to damnation of those that are lost; that the doctrine of the real presence of Christ’s body and blood in the Sacrament means that Christ’s flesh is eaten after a carnal manner, etc. All such presentations of doctrine are misrepresentations of the doctrines taught by the Bible and the Christian Church. Often, as in the case of the Sadducees, a doctrine is misrepresented in order to ridicule the truth.

b. The fact is that many, like the Sadducees, *do not know the Scriptures.* The Sadducees did not unqualifiedly accept the Old Testament, but they did claim that Moses was their authority



(Pentateuch). They therefore quoted from Moses, v. 24, and at the same time meant to say that Moses did not teach the resurrection of the body. Jesus showed them from their own "authority" that they were wrong. Vv. 31. 32. When God calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Ex. 3, 6, the God of men who had long ago passed out of this life, He certainly means to say that those men were not dead in the sense that they no longer existed and would never come to life again, for God is not a God of mere dust and ashes, but He is the God of the living. In calling Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God thereby testified to the fact that He would raise the bodies of those men and make good the promise which He had given to all who trusted in the Messiah. While the Sadducees had no doubt read those words written by Moses, they did not take them as they read and did not understand the meaning which the words clearly conveyed.

Also to-day many err because they do not know the Scriptures. Some have not read and studied them at all; they have perhaps read and studied many books by false teachers, but not the Bible. Others have read and studied the Bible, but, like the Sadducees, they have read *into* the Bible their own preconceived wrong ideas and do not read and accept what the Bible clearly teaches. 2 Pet. 3, 16. Modern Theology, Christian Science, etc., use the Bible to suit their own purpose and make it say what it does not say, nor what has been taught by historic Christianity for almost two thousand years.

## 2.

a. *Many seek to fathom the wisdom and power of God with their own finite, sinful reason* (the Sadducees were rationalists, the "modern theologians" of their day). In doing so, such rationalists speak of God as if He were also a mere creature like man. Denying that with God nothing is impossible, and denying in religion that which is supernatural, the rationalists present a God who is a very sorry excuse for a Being whom man is called upon to worship.

b. *Men love that sort of religion which permits them to live as they please.* The Sadducees were Epicureans. Pleasures, the sinful pleasures of this life, were their chief good. A religion which teaches repentance, good works, the resurrection of all men, and damnation for the wicked and unbelievers, was not a religion which appealed to them; for their ambition in life was not to prepare to live with God forevermore, but to make unto themselves "a heaven here upon earth" and live to the satisfaction of their own sinful flesh. Such people are like Felix, who, when Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and Judgment to come," trembled and said: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Acts 24, 25. There are many Sadducees living to-day. (Describe the life of the people in our *rationalistic* and

*materialistic* age and show why a God who is powerful enough to raise the dead and call all men before His judgment-seat does not appeal to them. Matt. 10, 28.)

*c. Mere unbelief, in the final analysis, explains the attitude of those who deny the power of God.* The Sadducees simply would not believe that God is powerful enough to raise the dust and ashes of the dead, change the natural bodies into spiritual bodies, 1 Cor. 15, 54, and establish a new relation between man and man in the higher sphere of eternal life. But when God is ready to raise all the dead, He will not ask the Sadducees for permission to do so, nor will He overlook them in the resurrection, for "the hour is coming in the which *all* that are in the graves *shall hear His voice and shall come forth*; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5, 28, 29; 2 Cor. 5, 10; 2 Pet. 3, 3—18.

We all must die. We all shall be raised from the dead. We all must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Let us so live that we need not be afraid to die. Therefore, let us truly repent of our sins, accept the grace of God in Christ, and live unto our Savior; then we shall say with Paul: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain," Phil. 1, 21, and shall live with Christ forevermore, 2 Tim. 4, 7, 8.

J. H. C. F.

### Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

LUKE 13, 10—17.

"You cannot please everybody." The employer and the employee, the banker and the investor, the policeman and the conductor, the pastor and the teacher, mothers and fathers, find it out. We must expect open and veiled criticisms, fair and unfair judgments, bearable and unbearable opinions. That should not surprise us, because we are living among sinful men, and we are no less sinful.

Our text shows us that even the righteous man and sinless Son of God, Jesus, saw a most merciful act of His praised and condemned at the same time.

#### THE HEALING OF A WOMAN BY JESUS ON THE SABBATH VARIOUSLY ADJUDGED.

1. *The healed woman glorified God.*
2. *A ruler of a synagog indignantly condemned Jesus.*
3. *The onlookers rejoiced.*

#### 1.

V. 10. Jesus was attending to His divine duties as the heavenly Teacher. Calling men to repentance. Compare vv. 6—9. The keynote of His ministrations was to seek and to save that which was lost.



Vv. 11—13a. Jesus was the Teacher sent by God, who proved His divine mission by lending aid to all in need. The affliction of the woman was of long standing and most distressing. Jesus miraculously healed her. What a benefaction!

V. 13b. Her release from her bodily ailment was a distinct blessing, but her doxology at this occasion was the fruit of a still greater blessing. By the teaching of Jesus she had learned to know God aright, and she now gave all glory to God whom she recognized and adored in Christ. She was a true daughter of Abraham. V. 16. Deliverance from spiritual blindness, what a benefaction!

In the days of trouble you have called upon God. Your cross may have been very heavy. God answered your prayer. Did you also glorify Him? Some may have more praise for the doctor than for God, for some medicine than for Him who blessed it. You will glorify God if you realize your utter helplessness and, above all, your miserable unworthiness. You will glorify God not only in words, but in deeds, especially by a life devoted to the service of God. May you learn to regard God's mercy in the true light!

What a lofty conception this woman had of Jesus' miracle! What a ridiculous attitude, however, the ruler of the synagog assumed!

## 2.

The presence of the woman in the synagog was, no doubt, arranged by the trickery of Jesus' enemies. V. 11, "behold." Peculiar that such an invalid should be present. V. 12, "He called her." Jesus could have cured her without uttering a word, but He knew what snare the crafty enemies had prepared. In defiance of them He plainly shows that He is minded to do what they considered wrong. V. 13, "laid His hands on her." Unnecessary, but He does it to show those falcon-eyed leaders that He will not be hampered by their bigotry; for they considered the raising of the hands for any kind of work on the Sabbath not permitted by the laws of the elders, even tying a knot, a sin. V. 15, "each one of you." Proves that Jesus was aware that He was dealing with a clique which was artfully trying to trap Him.

V. 14. What the ruler of the synagog said, proves that Jesus rightly judged the craft of His wily enemies. He was making an appeal to the common people of Israel and had severely attacked their leaders, Luke 11, 29—32; 39—54, and warned the people against their false teachings, Luke 12, 1. These politico-religious leaders were aroused. This ruler of the synagog may have been partially sincere in his misguided feeling, because he had imbibed the spirit of the laws of the elders, but in acting as the stool-pigeon for others to trap Christ, he was not sincere. He "said unto the people," but his shafts were directed against Christ. Cowardice and insincerity.

V. 15. Jesus disillusioned the poor simpleton, who was so prejudiced that he could not make the simplest deductions and see the greater worth of loosing a woman from bodily ills and her immortal soul from spiritual ills than loosing an ox or an ass from the stall. And a hypocrite he was besides because of his sinister motives while he pretended holy indignation.

We have men to-day who judge the deeds of Jesus in much the same manner. Some assert that if Jesus turned water into wine and had wine served instead of grape-juice, they would reject Him. Sabbatarians set up laws of their own making and would appear holier than Jesus. Any teacher who digresses from Christ's Word proves that He condemns Christ just as the hypocrite of the text did.

### 3.

The onlookers were neither hot nor cold.

V. 17a. "His adversaries were ashamed," or were put to shame. Quite a humiliation for these gentlemen who attempted to exhibit their superiority over Christ before the people. It was a "Humpty Dumpty" fall.

V. 17b. "Rejoiced," but not "glorified God." A person can be exceedingly happy when another is cured of some dread disease and never think of giving any praise for it to God. Thus these people were glad that a great prophet was in their midst who did glorious things, but—no repentance. Compare vv. 28—30; 33—35. They may also have rejoiced because they saw this quibbler and wiseacre put to shame. Very human to laugh when another makes a fool of himself, especially when he attempts to prove his excellence over another. Sad, indeed, that these people did not worship Christ as their God and Savior. Lukewarmness condemned Rev. 3, 15, 16.

Such mere rejoicing does not prove that you are a Christian. Whenever you see the glorious deeds of God, do not fail to humble yourself, to confess your sins, and to acknowledge His loving-kindness. Rom. 2, 4.

To adjudge Jesus, His person and His work, rightly requires the light of God's Word and the guidance of the Spirit of God. Otherwise we shall always shoot beside the mark. Pray God for His Spirit.

Chicago, Ill.

O. C. A. BOECLER.

## **Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.**

MATT. 5, 1—12.

Little did the disciples and the multitude think when they gathered about Jesus in that unnamed mountain that they were about to listen to the most famous sermon ever delivered on earth. The best-known and the most favorite part of the Sermon on the Mount is that contained in its opening words just read, commonly called



## THE BEATITUDES.

1. *The blessedness they pronounce;*
2. *The actual partakers of this blessedness.*

### 1.

a. The eight beatitudes, declarations of blessedness, are not empty, pious wishes, but the Savior's solemn judgment of the actual condition of those whom He pronounces blessed. Blessed are they, supremely happy, with a serene joy glowing in calm and contented souls, sharers of a truly divine happiness, 1 Tim. 1, 11; 6, 15; imperfectly enjoyed here in a sin-cursed world, brought to full fruition in the Kingdom of Glory.

b. These beatitudes are like so many facets of a diamond, each one manifesting forth the glory of the gem. They are a complete chain of precious pearls, each in its proper place, carefully linked one to another by the Master Mind.

V. 3. "*The poor in spirit,*" bowed down by the Law and by the knowledge of sin, reduced to spiritual bankruptcy, penitently realizing that they are destitute of the required qualities and virtues, "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. 3, 17; Is. 66, 2. The publican; the prodigal; Paul: "O wretched man that I am!"

"*Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" What a paradox! Kingdom of Grace with its blessedness consummated in the Kingdom of Glory. Not millennium. Now: Matt. 11, 12; 12, 28; chap. 13; Luke 17, 21; Rom. 14, 17; Matt. 13, 44 f. ("treasure," "pearl of great price"); Luke 12, 31; Eph. 3, 1. Then: 2 Pet. 1, 11; Jas. 2, 5; 2 Tim. 4, 18; Matt. 25, 34; Rev. 1, 6; 5, 10.

V. 4. "*They that mourn.*" The whole life of a Christian, contrition and repentance, much tribulation. John 16, 33; Acts 14, 32; Rom. 5, 3; Rev. 1, 9; 7, 14.

"*Shall be comforted.*" Not all that mourn shall be comforted. 1 Thess. 4, 13; 1 Tim. 6, 10; 2 Cor. 7, 10. Godly sorrow, 2 Cor. 7, 10 a; Ps. 34, 4; Is. 61, 2; 49, 13; 52, 9; 66, 13; John 16, 20, 22; Luke 16, 25; Rev. 21, 4. "The God of all comfort," 2 Cor. 1, 3, stands pledged to bestow this great blessing.

V. 5. "*The meek.*" The "poor," who "mourn" and who have been comforted, will be gentle, mild, meek. They do not take the brother by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest." Meekness is the warmth that melts ice. In their attitude toward God they bow, without murmuring, in willing submission to the will and direction of God. Ps. 40, 8.

"*They shall inherit the earth.*" It seems at times that the earth belongs to the haughty and boastful, who believe that might is right.

Ps. 37, 35 f.; 73, 1—12; nevertheless, Ps. 73, 16 ff. Happiness is not measured by the acre. Ps. 37, 11, 16; 1 Tim. 6, 6; Rom. 8, 28.

V. 6. "*They which hunger and thirst after righteousness.*" There is a longing in the heart of those who have the characteristics described in the former beatitudes for a life that is absolutely right, just towards man and devout towards God.

"*Shall be filled.*" The hankering after the dollar, knowledge, lustful pleasures, the apples of Sodom, is never satisfied, but increases in intensity and torment with the endeavor to gratify it. The earnest soul which hungers and thirsts after righteousness has the assurance that it will be filled more and more until the image of God will be fully restored. Ps. 17, 15.

V. 7. "*The merciful.*" Mercy has respect to need and distress. It is a disposition of the heart; yet, "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Light is reflected at the same angle as it falls, and the only way by which there can come from our faces and lives a glory that shall lighten many dark hearts and make sunshine in many a shady place is that these hearts shall be turned full to the very fountain itself of heavenly radiance and so have received of the Lord that which they also deliver unto men."

"*They shall obtain mercy.*" The unmerciful servant was delivered to the tormentors. "Whatsoever a man soweth . . . reap." God's mercy is a precious gift.

V. 8. "*The pure in heart.*" This beatitude, too, must be linked properly to the preceding. No heart is naturally pure. Neither can an Ethiopian change his skin, nor a leopard his spots, nor a sinner his soul. Titus 2, 14. Hearts are purified by faith. "Wash me, and I shall be clean." "Create in me . . . a clean heart!" Then Ezek. 36, 25 f.

"*They shall see God.*" The vision of God is the heaven of heavens. Here we see through a glass, darkly; yet we obtain glorious glimpses as God reveals Himself in His Word. Simeon: "I have seen Thy salvation." God is viewed in Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Christ, the Word, is "the revealing activity of the eternal God." "That Eternal Word has been unveiling, as man's dim eyes were capable of perceiving it, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." Nothing else will satisfy the eye. "Such sight will dim all the dazzling illusions of earth, as, when the sun leaps into the heavens, the stars hide their faces, and faint into invisibility." Now darkly, then face to face. 1 Cor. 13, 12; 1 John 3, 2.

V. 9. "*The peacemakers.*" Not they are meant that demand peace at any price; unionists. No argument for pacifism or disarmament. Rom. 13, 4. The peacemakers seek to establish peace at the Fountainhead. Sin is the disturbing element that separates man



from his God and that disturbs the relation to his fellow-man. They seek to bring about a reconciliation of man with his God. Then peace follows. "One preacher is better than an army." (President Coolidge.) Who has found peace with God will endeavor to live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12, 18. Even when the seas of emotions run high, the Christian's influence will command the tempest, "Peace, be still!"

"*They shall be called the children of God.*" God owns them for His children. Blessed consciousness! 1 John 3, 1, 2; Rom. 8, 17.

Vv. 10—12. "*They which are persecuted.*" "The world's recompense to the peace-bringers." Prison, lions, stones, fire, etc. Russia in recent years. Darkness hates light. Your professed, Scriptural, religious convictions are by no means popular, neither are orthodox principles and practises. *Live* your creed and find out. "We have the assassin's tongue instead of assassin's daggers." 2 Tim. 3, 12; 1 John 3, 13.

"*Theirs is the kingdom of heaven*"; "*great is your reward.*" The last promise links to that of the first beatitude. Not because of the hostile attitude of the world are the persecuted rewarded, but because of the Christian's faith and conduct which caused the persecution. Paul and Silas sang in prison. Acts 16, 25. The martyr's crown. Heb. 10, 33—35; Rev. 2, 10.

## 2.

a. The number of the actual partakers of the blessedness proclaimed in the Beatitudes is rather limited. Many disregard the Word of God and refuse to accept its exalted doctrines, but profess that their religion is summed up in the Sermon on the Mount and vainly entertain the vague hope that somehow Heaven's benedictions will be showered down upon them. What a faith!

Jesus spoke the Beatitudes to *His disciples*. Vv. 1, 2. Are we truly His disciples? Do we regard ourselves naked beggars before God? Does our iniquity cause us to mourn with bitter grief? Do we control our temper? Is our palate parched with an intense thirst after righteousness? Is our heart so merciful and so pure that we do not hesitate to open it to the eyes of the holy God? Does peace as a river flow from our influence upon the hearts of our fellow-men? May God fill our need and make us partakers of His blessings!

b. Yet, Jesus does not intend to limit these Beatitudes, and what they imply, to a select few. He went up into a mountain and opened His mouth and spoke within the hearing of the *multitudes*. Cf. vv. 1, 2; chap. 7, 28; Luke 7, 1. — Open your mouth that others may be attracted and share your happiness. Vv. 13, 16; Is. 40, 9; Matt. 10, 17.

## Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

MATT. 5, 13—16.

Matt. 5, 10—12. Christ's disciples are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Men revile them, persecute them, slander them for Christ's sake. John 15, 19. Their countrymen put them out of the synagogs, yea, killed them. Cf. John 16, 2 with Acts 8, 1; 9, 1; 12, 1—4. Jews and Gentiles have, with diabolical malice and cruelty, sought to exterminate the Christians. Faithful and consistent followers of Jesus are persecuted to-day.

What shall the Christians do? Retire from the world, say, into some cloister or cell and live the life of a hermit or monk? Many have done this. No, says Jesus. He Himself did not choose this kind of life. He went among His enemies to save them. He sent His disciples out into the hostile world to deliver it. This is our duty, our responsibility. A Christian should say: Rom. 1, 14.

## OUR DUTY IN THE WORLD.

1. *We are the salt of the earth;*    2. *We are the light of the world.*

## 1.

A. *We are the salt of the earth.* V. 13.

a. The earth is corrupt. Earth: world: inhabitants. It needs "salt." It is a festering, putrescent mass of corruption. Mankind decomposing, rotting spiritually, morally. The elements of dissolution are within. Cf. Eph. 4, 22; Gen. 4, 11—13. 5. Original sin. A loathsome sight, a stench before heaven, ripe for destruction. Cf. Gen. 6, 7; Mal. 4, 6b. — Earth corrupt in Christ's time. Cf. Rom. 1, 18—32. Heathenism: unspeakable abominations of paganism, orgies, licentious rites, unnatural vices. Eph. 2, 1—3; 4, 17—19. Judaism: its savor lost, now rabbinism, Pharisaism, Sadduceeism; seat and source of error, corruption. World again ripe for judgment. — To-day: Society is disintegrating. The earth is corrupt socially, politically, economically. Corruption in the state, in the home, of the individual. Unbelief; immorality. Civilization is breaking down.

b. *We are the salt of the earth.* We are the means of preserving, improving, saving the world. Salt seasons, preserves from decomposition. Salt in animal matter: the Christian in the world. We are instruments in the hand of God to regenerate man, renovate the earth. God makes us "salt," operates in and through us, by His grace and His Word. The "new man," the "new mind," the "right spirit." The course of the human race is downwards — devolution, degeneration; but Christianity among savage tribes, criminal classes! Christian influence civilizing, regenerating. — God would have saved



Sodom for the sake of ten righteous men. God still spares the earth because of the righteous, the Christians.

B. Let us "have salt in ourselves." Cf. Mark 9, 50.

a. The *duty*. Salt must be applied; so we must mingle, in the proper manner, with society. We must come into contact with our fellow-man. We must exert the influence we possess. Silent, but efficacious influence of example. A holy life of faith. Zealous efforts: We must rebuke sin, ungodliness, immorality. We must check the progress of corruption by the Word of God. Fervent prayer for men. In brief, we must be true, faithful, active Christians and preachers of the Law and Gospel.

b. The *warning*. V.13b. Salt may lose its savor, flavor, preserving property. Maundrell writes about the Valley of Salt near Aleppo, Syria: "I broke a piece off that part which was exposed to the rain, sun, and air. Though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perfectly lost its savor. The inner part, which was connected to the rock, retained its savor, as I found by proof." Such salt is insipid, is useless. The Jews strewed it, as we do sand, and trampled it under foot. So a Christian may lose his spirituality by contact with the world. He may deny the faith. He may begin to embrace error, conform to the world, become worldly, irreligious, wicked. The theater, dance, lodge, etc. Soon the saltiness, spiritual life, is gone. He is then good for nothing. He is an offense. He will be cast out into "outer darkness," condemned to everlasting shame and contempt. — May the Lord preserve us! May He conserve in us true spirituality, so that we may be and remain "the salt of the earth"!

## 2.

A. We are the light of the world. V. 14.

a. The darkness of the world. Darkness symbol of ignorance, error, sin, misery, death, damnation — the lost estate. Cf. Eph. 4, 17—19; Rom. 1, 21—25; Is. 60, 2; John 1, 5; 3, 19; 12, 46. Dark state: dark fate. Man is blind, groping in error. Ignorance of God, of way to God, of self. He lives in "the shadow of death," passes into eternal darkness.

b. We are the light of the world. Christ, of course, is "the true Light," "the Light of the world." We, too, are a light, but "in the Lord"; not by nature, but by grace. Cf. Eph. 5, 8; 1 Pet. 2, 9; Is. 60, 1—3; Phil. 2, 15; Rev. 1, 20. Not mere reflection, like the glow of the moon in the rays of the sun. No, Christians are a light. They shine; Christ shines in and through them. They "hold forth the Word of Life." Phil. 2, 16. They have the truth, are holy and happy. They shine in their confession, character, conduct.

### B. We should let our light shine before men.

a. This is God's plan. The design of our calling. Then we act in character. Judea a hilly country. A city built on a hill cannot be concealed. The lamp is lit so that all may see. How absurd to light the lamp and then to cover it with a vessel! So God leaves the Christian in the world to lighten others, to diffuse the knowledge and blessings of Christianity. A Christian is a light; God intended him to be. He could light the world immediately or through the angels; but His plan of salvation involves the agency of regenerated men, Christians.

b. This is our duty. Christ expressly declares it. He says: V. 16a. Cf. 1 Pet. 2, 9b. 12; also Is. 60, 1—3. Radiate the light that is within you; show your Christian character. Associate with your fellow-men. Confess the saving truth; perform your Christian duty. "Hold forth the Word of life."

c. The *purpose*, v. 16: a. that men may see our good works. Our faith they cannot see; but the fruit of faith, good works, is visible. A Christian does good works: works of righteousness, of benevolence, of godliness; charity to friend and foe, missions, etc. Cf. Titus 2, 11. 12; John 3, 21. — Men should see "our good works," not us. — b. That men may glorify our Father in heaven. The final purpose is not self-glory, but God's glory. Cf. 1 Pet. 2, 12. Men are influenced by good works. They are induced to seek the source. Men's prejudices are softened; they are drawn to the truth, which may convert them. Thus they may become worshipers of God, which will redound to His eternal glory. Thus the heathen were attracted by the brotherly love of the early Christians. A true, consistent Christian life still has this effect by the grace of God. — No ostentation or affectation. Cf. Matt. 6, 1—6. 16—18. Not self. Yet we must not shrink from publicity, fearless manifestation of the light burning within us. The object is always the glory of God.

*Exhortation:* Do your duty in the world. Do it boldly, consistently, always. You are children of light. Let men see this light and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Columbia, Pa.

JOHN G. SOHN.

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## Ten Practical Hints for Institutional Mission-Workers.

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### I.

Do not enter an institution without a prayer on your lips in which you ask God's guidance and blessing for winning souls for Christ.

## II.

Always show due respect to the authorities that be. Do not, however, forget your duties and responsibilities over against your God and your neighbor.

## III.

In your ministrations show substantial pity and sympathy. A sympathetic heart is to the patient as a warm rain to the thirsty earth.

## IV.

Understanding the patient presupposes tact. Proper treatment of each individual case is tact. However unreasonable your charge may be, however selfish, do not forget that his spiritual welfare is entrusted to your care.

## V.

Always be your own self. Do not pretend to be something which you are not. Sincerity and love of the work are absolutely necessary for success.

## VI.

Do not shrink from those who are dirty in the extreme, both bodily and morally, crushed under the burden of guilt and sin. Though the life of some may have been ever so worthless, ever so lost and ill spent, Christ Jesus nevertheless considered it worth shedding His blood for on Golgotha to redeem it.

## VII.

Address your charges by their names, and correctly. Some poor fellow may be grateful for this little act of courtesy; it may assist him in regaining his self-respect.

## VIII.

Do not attempt to be a professional reformer. There is any amount of talk about reform and oceans of sickly sentimentality. There is but one power to reform and save: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## IX.

At all times remember your sacred calling and act accordingly. "Preach the Gospel to every creature," is your God-given vocation. Follow it conscientiously, faithfully, and intensely.

## X.

Do not consider it a sacrifice to have left a well-organized congregation in order to preach the Gospel to the poor and broken-hearted. It is a privilege to do that. You are following in the footsteps of Him who, while on earth, "went about doing good."

Milwaukee, Wis.

E. A. DUEMLING.



## Literatur.

**Christ Preeminent.** Studies in the Epistle to the Colossians by *W. H. Griffith Thomas, D. D.* The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 826 N. La Salle St., Chicago. 125 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, \$1.00, postage extra.

This is the last book from the pen of Dr. Griffith Thomas, whose death occurred in July, 1924. It reflects the author's implicit faith in the Word of God and contains material which should easily be worked up into a sermon series on Colossians. As a commentary the book does not so much endeavor to explain the text verse by verse as exhibit the teachings of greater connected passages in topical presentation. G.

**The Pharisees.** By *R. Travers Herford.* The Macmillan Company, New York. Price, \$2.00.

This book is a typical product of the school of modern unbelievers who make theological research their specialty. The religious position of the author is indicated by this statement of his: "Each [Judaism and Christianity] has an independent right of existence, and while the adherents of each may, as they naturally would, find more satisfaction for their own spiritual needs in their own type of religion, neither is entitled to deny the validity of the other, and neither the one nor the other can establish a claim to be the absolute religion." The book is a scholarly production. The history and the religion of Pharisaism are discussed quite thoroughly, and the reader will not fail to be impressed with the immense learning of the author in the field of rabbinical literature. However, to me a number of statements of the author, apart from those which are unscriptural, appear open to serious argument. His account of the rise of the "traditions of the elders" is different from that usually given, even by Jewish scholars. A.

Im Verlag von Johannes Herrmann, Zwickau, Sachsen, sind erschienen:

1. **Weisungen und Warnungen aus den Sprüchen Salomonis.** Dargeboten von D. C. M. Zorn. Preis: 60 Cts.

Wieder eine köstliche Gabe aus der Feder unsers verehrten D. Zorn. In seiner volkstümlichen Weise streicht er in diesem Buch die weisen Lehren, die in den Sprüchen Salomos enthalten sind, heraus. Auch fehlt die Anwendung nicht. Der Prediger und Seelsorger wird hier viel Anregung und wertvolles Material für seine Arbeit finden, und den Gemeindegliedern wird das Buch zur Belehrung und Erbauung gereichen.

2. **The Twins. A Story for Children.** By *Marg. Lenk.* Translated from the German by *Louis P. Lochner.* Price, 70 cts.

Another one of the charming, sunshiny stories of Marg. Lenk, done into English. Wholesome and, at the same time, attractive food is offered here. Pastors should earnestly commend these stories to their young parishioners—and the old will enjoy them too—who are casting about for interesting books.

3. **Roughing It for Christ in the Wilds of Brazil.** By *Albert Lehenbauer.* Price, 20 cts.

The esteemed author here describes his experiences and his activities as Lutheran pastor and missionary in Brazil. The title is well chosen. The reader will find this account intensely interesting and quite probably feel ashamed of his own lukewarmness in supporting the mission-work of our Church in South America. May I suggest to the brethren that they read this booklet to their young people's societies, omitting, of course, such paragraphs as are not suitable for this purpose?

All the above-named books may be ordered from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. No. 3 may, in addition, be ordered from Rev. E. C. Wegchaupt, Box 73, Chatham, Ill. A.

**The Ethical Teaching of Jesus.** By *Ernest F. Scott*. The Macmillan Co., New York, N. Y. Price, \$1.50.

Dr. Scott is Professor of New Testament Criticism in Union Theological Seminary. His book is a scholarly production, as everybody will concede. At the same time it is written along the lines of modern higher criticism. The religion of Jesus is said to be "resting on the moral principles which He laid down." The fourth gospel is considered as presenting the life of Jesus, "not in strictly historical fashion, but under the light of a given theology." Scott says: "That Jesus taught such a doctrine," as the one found in the Gospel according to St. John, "even in the inner circle of His disciples, is hardly possible, for it is strongly Hellenistic in character and rests on assumptions which are quite foreign to the synoptic teaching." Jesus was a mere fallible man. To quote: "He Himself, like other great teachers, was unable to foresee the full consequences of His own thought." No more words are needed to characterize the theology of the author. His work has value because it presents in succinct form most of the views which modern negative scholarship has adopted with respect to the New Testament. After a careful reading of this comparatively small book (129 pages) one will be quite well informed on the trend of present-day "enlightened" thought in the New Testament field. A.

**Down through the Ages.** By *Frank E. Gaebelin*. Macmillan Co., New York, N. Y. Price, \$1.00.

The subtitle of this book reveals its purpose: "The Story of the King James Bible." The author sets out to do a noble thing, and on the whole he has succeeded. The book is not intended to aid the scholar in his researches, but to give a popular account of the origin of our English Bible. Professor Gaebelin writes with grace and enthusiasm. As one gratefully perceives, he believes in the inspiration of the Scriptures and holds that the redemptive work of Christ is the great theme which binds the various parts of the Bible together. Now and then a few more historical details and less glittering rhetoric might have been offered. At one or two places I had to withhold assent. Young people will read the book with delight and profit. A.

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## The Glad Tidings Borne to the Other Side of the Equator.

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### The Continent to the South of Us.

South America is a continent of vast proportions. The distance from the extreme northern to the extreme southern point is 4,760 miles. The greatest width is 3,200 miles. The area covered is about 6,844,602 square miles.

When steamships sailing from New York enter the first port of South America, they have been on the way probably fifteen days and made about 5,000 miles. Missionaries traveling via Porto Alegre transfer to a smaller ocean vessel at this port and arrive at their destination a month after having left New York. Those bound for Argentina make a voyage of more than 6,000 miles, and the trip from New York to Buenos Aires consumes three weeks, unless they have taken passage on a very fast-sailing steamship.

The population of South America is very much varied both as

to origin and character. Descendants of the Spaniards and of the Portuguese, the original settlers, have intermingled with other races. Scattered throughout the wilds of the continent are 350 Indian tribes, 240 of them in Brazil, branches of the Guarani stock. In the northern part of the country they are still in their savage state and very much feared by white men, who give them a wide berth. The most civilized are the Araucanians in Chile, where they are engaged in agriculture and other peaceful pursuits. The lowest type is in the extreme south of the continent. A terrible weapon which these uncouth men use in the chase is the bolas, made of different lengths of rawhide thongs, each terminating in a leaden ball, which securely entangles the neck and legs of the game.

No official census is taken in some of the countries, and consequently it is impossible to give the exact number of inhabitants. According to very conservative reports, which, however, are not brought up to date, the population numbers about 65,000,000, excluding the Indians, whose number is placed at about 5,000,000. Others give South America a population of 85,000,000, including 17,000,000 aborigines.

There is a great variety of soil and climate. On the other side of the equator the seasons are the reverse of ours, summer beginning about Christmas. Lofty mountain ranges, the Andes in the west and the Sierras in Brazil, alternate with fertile valleys and extensive plains. Many streams, among which are some of the largest in the world, water the land.

The continent is noted for the wealth of its resources and its productivity. But its development and progress have been retarded by frequent revolutions and the lack of transportation facilities in the rural districts. Immense regions, moreover, are comparatively unexplored; they are partly in a state of primeval wilderness. Various wild beasts roam in the jungles, the forests are filled with numerous birds of brilliant plumage, and in the tall grass of the wilds many poisonous reptiles are lurking. Large flocks of ostriches may be seen, some wild, some tame, in the Gran Chaco and in the region below the Uruguay and Parana rivers. Immense herds of sheep and cattle numbering tens of thousands, graze on the plains. The herdsmen, called Gauchos, rough men of the plains and of very few wants, are expert horsemen; they know every bridle-path in the land and are indispensable to the ranchmen. Though ordinarily very gentle, they become dangerously fierce when provoked.

Railroads have not yet been built as extensively as in our country, nor are the trains as luxuriously equipped.

Many towns and cities have one or more parks or squares with tropical or semitropical plants and flowers that are very attractive. The main street or streets in a number of them have wide sidewalks



with mosaic designs of small white-and-black stones. Although the San Marcos University at Lima, Peru, was founded a hundred years before Harvard received its charter, much illiteracy prevails in South America. Some of the countries, however, are striving to have the masses educated and have not only established primary and secondary schools in increasing numbers, but have also added a number of universities, at which capable men lecture and teach.

In most of the countries the Roman Catholic Church is the established church of the land. The priests wear their cassocks in the streets as well as in the houses of worship. Several noted shrines, to which pilgrimages are made by great hosts of men, might be mentioned. Numerous smaller shrines may be observed along some of the roads. Superstition and immorality hold multitudes in their vise-like grasp. Horse-races, cock-fights, and the like attract large crowds of spectators, who lay wagers on the outcome. Dance-halls, theaters, immodest picture-shows are plentiful. Before Lent, carnivals with grotesque parades are held in many places; the streets are densely packed with men, women, and children, who throw confetti or squirt scented water into each other's faces, and the entire affair winds up with a grand ball and other orgies of the flesh. Lotteries are legalized, and an entire army of men gain their livelihood by selling chances.

### Are Our Missions Needed?

Is bread needed when men are starving; medicine and remedial measures when men are sick; wholesome dishes when men have been treated only to tainted food? If so, missions in South America are needed.

The many Indians who are still in a savage and pagan state live in constant dread of evil spirits. At night they are afraid to go near the swamps because they regard them as the haunts of devils. Some believe in a demon who is supposed to live in the mountains and tree-tops and to infect their food. To protect themselves against the evil doings of this foul spirit, they resort to exorcism. They are always fearing for their lives, believing that a witch-doctor who hates them will send cats, rats, snakes, or beetles into their bodies. They believe in the transmigration of the soul and hold that the good are rewarded and the wicked punished. To appease their offended deities, they offer sacrifices of sheep and fowl. But in spite of all they find no peace for their souls. Some missionary work is being done among the Indians by other churches, but many of the unfortunate aborigines have never heard anything of the true God and the Gospel of Christ. Is it not a pity that they must continue to live in ignorance of the salvation secured for them? Would it not be a grand, noble, and blessed undertaking to bring the Word of Life to these perishing souls?

Many immigrants from Germany and Russia have made their homes in Latin America. Brazil solicited immigration and offered special inducements to these people. It is doing so to a certain extent now. Years ago the number of German immigrants was rather large, for a time it dropped off considerably, but at the present time ships are again bringing them, not by the hundreds, but by thousands, so reliable reports inform us. A letter recently received, in which we were asked whether we have a mission at a certain place, stated that several hundred souls desiring a church had immigrated to Brazil. Other countries, too, report a large influx of Germans. Though many of these are wholly indifferent, if not hostile, to the Church, this can by no means be said of all of them.

But many of the latter had not been provided for spiritually as they should have been before they came to South America. In order to be able to understand the peculiarity of home missions in that field, it will be necessary to delineate the congregations, so-called, applying for pastors from our circles.

These congregations are composed of colonists who consider themselves children of the Reformation. In Russia, from which European country most of them have come, they were members of the Church called Lutheran, and many of them wish to be acknowledged as Lutherans in their new home. But they have no conception of what true Lutheranism is, what our Lutheran Church stands for. The pastors in the old country had such a large territory to look after that it took them a long time to cover it, and they could preach at the several churches only at long intervals. What did the congregations do in the mean while? Go without services? No, indeed; they had services regularly enough, but these were conducted by the sexton, who also served as teacher, or *vice versa*. In the absence of the pastor these men took his place, holding services, administering Baptism, officiating at funerals, and preparing classes for confirmation. But often, if not usually, they were men who were in no wise qualified to be the religious instructors of either young or old. Hence the people were not indoctrinated and did not learn to distinguish between the true and the false in religion. Their Lutheranism frequently consisted merely in bearing that name and in observing certain rites and customs, in having their infants baptized, their children confirmed after they had entered their teens, the marriage of bridal couples solemnized at church, in asking some one to officiate at the funeral service to be held when a member of the family had died, and in remitting the ruble, which was the annual tax levied upon church-members.

Arriving in South America, those who still desired to worship God and have their children given at least some kind of an education, organized community churches, of which any one could become

a member regardless of his faith, as long as he was willing to pay a certain initiation fee and a stipulated annual assessment amounting to 8 milreis or its equivalent in pesos. At the same time community schools were established, in which little, very little, religion, and that of a very general character, was taught, lest somebody take exceptions to the doctrines inculcated; or religious instruction was dispensed with altogether.

Such are the deplorable conditions among German colonists in South America even to-day, though many of them still lay claim to the Lutheran name. And such is the material our missionaries have to work with when they are called upon to minister to these people. They really have become estranged from the true Lutheran Church and must be won back and taught anew to appreciate the treasures with which the Lord has favored our dear Church. That this is hard work, requiring painstaking efforts, labor that has to be performed with much patience, will be readily understood.

Then there are colonies where the lonely souls have no one to give them spiritual advice or instruction of any kind, where the children learn nothing, or next to nothing, of the merciful Redeemer, who became a child to save them from their sins, and where the parents have been without the ministrations of the Gospel and without true nourishment for their souls so long that either they are in a most deplorable state of spiritual degeneration, or their hearts faint with hunger for spiritual food without having any one to offer it to them. And such conditions prevail not only in such sections of the country where the families are widely scattered, but also in thickly settled communities. Others have been fed with the husks of human speculations, whims, and fancies and are dissatisfied and disgusted with the men who pose as ministers of Christ. However, they are at a loss what to do and how to remedy the evil because they have no one to whom they might turn for advice and help. Disreputable characters — adventurers who were never educated for the ministry in any sense of the word, men who bore an unsavory reputation when they left home, religious quacks and mountebanks, who only exploit the people and fleece them as much as they can — are not as numerous as they formerly were, but their tribe is not yet wholly extinct. Others from beyond the seas are far more intent upon cultivating or preserving the German language and customs, the ideals and institutions of their mother country, upon strengthening and promoting German interests, than upon spreading true Christianity. Meanwhile men from our country work tooth and nail to gain adherents for their sectarian views and principles. Pseudo-apostles infest the countries, deceiving the people and leading them from one error into another. No doubt, some of them mean well and forego many comforts and advantages which they might enjoy, but it is a case of the blind leading the blind, of men who do not know



the unadulterated truth and yet act as if they were messengers of the true Gospel. But how can men who know of none but polluted springs offer others the crystal pure waters of salvation? Do not such conditions prove the need of missionary activity on the part of our Church? Are they not a challenge to the Lutheran Church to step in and prosecute the missionary task entrusted to it by the Lord of the Church in an aggressive manner, without growing impatient or weary? Would it not be a shame if we were to let sincere men who have far less light than we have been favored with make sacrifices to carry a candle-light to benighted souls while we would stand idly by, we, who by God's grace might send the brilliant light of a multiwatt electric light into that darkness?

Worse conditions prevail among the descendants of the Portuguese in Brazil and those of the Spaniards in Argentina and other countries of South America where Rome has held sway for centuries; where the inquisition used to rage and thousands were tortured to death because they dared to resist the mandates of that tyrant in the Vatican at Rome; where, not many years ago, men who endeavored to spread the Bible were persecuted and maltreated and copies of the Scripture burned like so much rubbish, nay, pestilential trash and refuse. Is it not to be expected that spiritual life is at a low, a very low, an exceedingly low, ebb, where well-nigh medieval ignorance and conditions prevail to a large extent even to-day? There is a vast difference between the Catholicism as it appears on the surface, in countries where Protestantism makes its influence felt, and Catholicism in countries in which the Pope's authority has been unquestioned for generations — and then some generations. In countries like those of South America, where Rome has thrown off all restraints and does not wear any disguise, but presents itself in its natural make-up, appearing as it really is, it may be seen in its true colors and character. There are priests who, sincere from their point of view, deplore the low spiritual plane of the masses and wish it were different. But the majority of them are bigoted, fanatic minions of the Pope, who follow in the footsteps of those occupants of the papal throne who are a byword and an object of derision in the estimation of cultured and Christian men. And as the water never rises higher than its level, what can you expect of those who have such uncouth fellows and hirelings of His Papal Majesty for their spiritual guides? Blasphemy and profanity may be heard in South America to such an extent that one almost smells the fumes from the infernal regions and hears Satan hiss out his blasphemies. Cheating and lying, betting and gambling, depravity and corruption, lewdness and prostitution, are not confined to the scum, the riffraff, and the rabble, but at least some of these vices are indulged in quite extensively also by men of whom it would not be expected. Many who have received a liberal education and have a regard for virtue

and morality despise the men in the cassock and the miter as well as the Church they represent, under whose *régime* such conditions can be as wide-spread as they are. Many reject all religion and heedlessly rush into everlasting perdition. Many are skeptics. Many are full of unrest, yearning for peace without knowing where to find it, doubting that the truth can be found in any Church, and spend their life in silent despair.

Many and large fields in which such conditions prevail have not even been touched by us. We have reached only a small part of the Germans in a few of the republics of South America. There are smaller or larger groups of them in the remaining countries, who have no one to bring them the Word of God as, by the grace of God, only the Lutherans can. Some of them have already pleaded for a true and faithful ambassador of Christ without seeing their request granted because the men and the funds were not available.

Likewise we have only begun to let the saving light shine into the wide-spread and hideous darkness covering the natives, whose huts and homes here and there dot the continent. Meanwhile Hindu temples and Mohammedan mosques are being erected in some quarters of South America by devotees of those idolatrous and carnal systems of religion which can but make the inhabitants of the land exchange the clanking chains of one kind of ungodliness for fetters of another type of iniquity, equally oppressive and crushing, hurtful and damning to the soul.

### What Prompted Missionary Action.

At the convention of our Synod in 1899 a memorial urged the inauguration of home missions in Brazil and Argentina. Attention was called to the large number of Germans who had immigrated to South America and settled there. Special mention was made of Sao Paulo, a state in Brazil with a German population estimated at 60,000 and only three unionistic pastors and two teachers who ministered to their spiritual wants. The matter was referred to the General Board of Home Missions with instructions to make further investigations and to take action if conditions were found favorable for beginning mission-work there. The following year Rev. C. J. Broders was sent out as prospector. His mission was not in vain. In a short time four congregations, organized by him, called upon Synod to supply them with pastors. First among these was the congregation at Sao Pedro, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, to which Rev. Wm. Mahler was assigned, being asked to do pioneer work for genuine Lutheranism in Latin America.

In 1905 a member of the unionistic La Plata Synod invited Rev. Mahler, then presiding officer of the Brazil District, to visit him, as he desired to confer with him about the feasibility of having his charge supplied with a Missourian shepherd. The result of that con-

ference and of subsequent developments was that Rev. H. Wittrock was placed in that field, and another country came under the fostering care of the Church of the Reformation.

About six years ago the prefect of a province in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, invited Rev. T. W. Strieter to open a school for the natives in the town of Lagoa Vermelha. Simultaneously with the opening of the school, services were begun, and Rev. R. Hasse was called to assist in the work. The importance of this phase of Lutheran missionary work in Brazil is plainly shown by the bitter opposition it aroused on the part of the Catholics.

Last year Rev. Aug. Drews, touched by the spiritual distress of the negroes in the region in which he is laboring among the Germans, began to proclaim the tidings of salvation by grace through faith in Christ to these benighted souls, thus blazing a trail by which, it is hoped, others of that race will be led to a knowledge of the way of life.

### **The Fields of Labor.**

#### **BRAZIL.**

Brazil covers a much larger area than the United States. Its population indeed is not so numerous. In 1920 it was credited with 30,553,509 inhabitants, not including the Indians. Though it is warmer there in places than here, the climate is healthful. Rio de Janeiro, the capital, with more than a million inhabitants, nestling in the bosom of the mountains, is a city of great natural charms. In several of its streets it has exceedingly high and stately palms, beautiful gardens, grand asphalt-paved boulevards, unexcelled illumination, and imposing buildings and is hardly behind the time in other respects. Its well-fortified and large harbor is pronounced the most beautiful in the world.

The coast region has many lakes and lagoons, the largest one being Lagoa dos Patos (Duck Lagoon), 150 miles long and 30 miles wide, and navigable by smaller ocean vessels. On this lagoon Porto Alegre is situated. A mountain range, the Serra do Mar, extends from the western boundary of Brazil to the coast. Some sections of the country are covered with vast primeval forests. The plains are particularly adapted to the raising of cattle and the growing of wheat. On the pasture lands thousands of herds are grazing. The country is rich in all kinds of minerals: gold, silver, copper, nickel, lead, etc. Precious stones, including diamonds, are found. Most of our coffee and rubber is imported from there, not to mention other commodities.

Since 1890 Church and State are separate, while before that the Roman Catholics had complete and unrestricted control in Brazil.

The original settlers were Portuguese families. German immigrants have made their homes here since 1825. The first ones hailed



from Hundsruock, the bleak and barren mountainous region in Prussia west of the Rhine. These were followed by many others from Brunswick, Pomerania, and especially from different parts of Russia. The greatest number of Germans are found in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where 400,000 have settled. In older colonies the people are comparatively thrifty and prosperous; in the newer ones, conditions are very primitive and the people still poor. The roads which our missionaries have to travel are fair enough in some parts of the country, but in others they are rough and craggy, full of ruts and gulches, and sloping to such an extent, now on this side, now on the other, that the vehicle is often in danger of tipping over. In some sections there are only narrow trails, upon which progress is both slow and dangerous, because the way leads along deep precipices or through dense forests, in which unpleasant contact may be made with the low branches overhanging the trail or through a mass of bamboo, the tops of which have been chopped off, and the sharp ends are apt to cut the rider or gouge out his eyes.

Our advance guards have penetrated into the state of Santa Catharina, where the German population was said to be 120,000 and into Parana, which, two years ago, was credited with 30,000 Germans. All these people in the country are engaged in farming. Their implements are a plow and a scythe.

#### THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

Argentina, occupying one-sixth of the area of the southern continent, declared its independence July 9, 1816. "The general aspect of the country varies from the majestic peaks of the Andes to the level plains of the Pampa." It is well watered and rich in vegetation, is one of the greatest grain-producing countries, ranks fourth among the stock-raising countries, and has a number of large packing-houses. The chief products are wheat, maize, flax, linseed, oats, and sugarcane. Extensive vineyards yield most delicious grapes; peaches, pears, plums, figs, dates, bananas, and oranges also do well.

Entre Rios and Corrientes are the Argentine Mesopotamia. Cordoba is noted for its beautiful scenery. Misiones abounds in primeval forests, which might tempt a lumberman to feel envious of the owners of that excellent timber.

The population numbers about 10,000,000 souls, one-fifth of whom at least live in Buenos Aires, a most cosmopolitan, live, and progressive city, with magnificent buildings, pretty boulevards, costly and numerous monuments and statues in various parts of the city, a famous cemetery, and improvements, comforts, and conveniences that are up to the minute, among which is a subway affording rapid transit.

The majority of Argentina's inhabitants are of Spanish descent; 125,000 or more are Germans, immigrated chiefly from the provinces

of Vologda, Volhynia, and Bessarabia in Russia, while others came from various parts of Germany. Most of these immigrants live in the rural districts, and their occupation is farming. Some of them own the land they till, but the majority rent from the rich land-owners, on whose estates American farm machinery is much in use.

Though the Roman Catholic faith is the established religion and fabulous amounts of the public funds are appropriated for the maintenance of the Pope's Church, the constitution of the Argentine Republic guarantees full religious liberty to its citizens.

Education is compulsory. Every child of school age has to attend the public school; but private and parochial schools are permitted under certain restrictions.

#### PARAGUAY.

Paraguay has an area of 171,815 square miles and seven years ago had a population of 1,000,000. The eastern part of the country is a plateau of slight elevation. The Gran Chaco, west of the Paraguay River, is a great plain. Virgin forests in the east yield far-famed timber. The chief vegetable product is yerba maté, or Paraguayan tea, which is used universally by rich and poor all over the continent. The chief pursuit of the people is farming. Good grazing lands are plentiful.

Roman Catholicism is the state religion. Education here also is compulsory. The German colonies are growing in number.

#### Christ's Standard Bearers Engaged in Their Vocation.

Christ's commission to His Church is: "Preach the Gospel." "Teach them [all nations] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Preaching the Gospel publicly and teaching Christ's Word in private is the chief work of the missionary. The majority of the ministers labor only among the Germans, a few only among the natives, while some devote themselves partly to the Germans, partly to the natives, preaching in the Portuguese or the Spanish language, as the case may require. Usually they serve a number of stations. In some cases they do their traveling by railroad. Often this is not possible. If the roads permit, the missionaries use a buggy, though more travel on horseback or ride a burro. In mountainous regions it takes a long time to get from one place to another; sometimes also in other sections, because the charges to be served are so far apart. Missionaries have been in the saddle regularly for more than twelve hours to reach one of their stations, in other cases it took them two full days, and even five, to cover the distance between their home and the colony or colonies depending upon them for spiritual ministrations. As a rule, the men cannot serve more than one place on a Sunday. During the week they are engaged in other duties. Services therefore usually are biweekly at one place, once a month at another, every six weeks

and every two or three months at others, while some stations are served only twice a year.

When an organization has been effected, the pastors avail themselves of the opportunity of indoctrinating their members in congregational meetings. Choir meetings, at which hymns and other spiritual songs are practised, are sometimes made to serve the same purpose. All this is done, as the case may demand, in German, Portuguese, or Spanish. In some cases night school is held for the benefit of young people who had no opportunity to get an education when they were children. Often pupils are boarded by the pastor to enable them to attend a Christian day-school. The parents furnish provisions and a little ready cash to meet the expenses for other things. Confirmation classes are held regularly as a matter of course. To be able to instruct the children in some distant colony, the missionary takes up temporary quarters at such a place and is busy with the pupils for a number of weeks both morning, afternoon, and evening, teaching them the Catechism and Bible History. Christmas, and in some places Easter and the Reformation Festival, are occasions upon which the missionaries and teachers avail themselves of the opportunity to give the children special instructions, and the fruits of such extra endeavors are very gratifying.

In some congregations a church library proves a successful means of disseminating the truth and of effecting spiritual advancement. Tracts also are made to serve this purpose with good results.

Two periodicals published in the German language and one in the Portuguese — *Ev.-Luth. Kirchenblatt* (Ev. Luth. Church-paper) in Brazil, *Ev.-Luth. Kirchenbote* (Ev. Luth. Church Messenger) in Argentina, and the *Mensagemiro Lutherano* (Lutheran Messenger) in Brazil — have a good circulation and are read with eagerness. They contribute not a little to indoctrinating their readers, who thus become enabled all the more to distinguish between true and false teachings, genuine and spurious Christianity. Because of the lack of sound religious text-books and other literature in the Portuguese and Spanish language Luther's Small Catechism, as well as a number of hymns and prayers, have been rendered into Portuguese, also an order of service and forms for ministerial acts. In a measure this applies also to Spanish.

Recently our brethren started a publishing concern, which is to supply books for use in church and school, — a move which ought to prove of great benefit to the missions.

Illustrated lectures on the missions may be secured by addressing Mr. H. F. Rohrman, 1451 Marquette Building, Chicago, Ill.

### Christian Day-Schools.

An outstanding feature of our Lutheran church-work is the training of the young in the Christian day-school. Our missionaries in South America avail themselves of this time-honored institution



with a laudable zeal and to good advantage. In the towns in which they live, many of the pastors teach school every day of the week; not indeed all day, but from 7.30 in the morning until noon or a corresponding number of hours in the afternoon. Also some of the teachers are available at one place in the morning and elsewhere in the afternoon. Some congregations charge no tuition, others only a nominal amount.

In Brazil, where Church and State are separate, the establishment of Christian day-schools offers little difficulty. Public schools are not yet numerous enough everywhere to supply the demand for education, especially in the country districts. The German immigrants usually are eager to have their children attend school, and some of the natives are also beginning to realize the advantage of an education. Therefore, it is not a difficult matter to gather a sufficient number of children to open a school.

If churches or other organizations so desire, they can have a school subsidized by the State. True to the principles of our Church, however, which stands for clean-cut separation of the spiritual and secular realm, our missionaries consistently oppose the use of public funds for the support of religious institutions.

In Argentina the Lutheran schools have less easy sailing, but they are regarded by our missionaries as an indispensable fixture of their missions. Where the public school is held in the morning, our Christian day-schools are open in the afternoon and *vice versa*.

While there would be work enough for more missionaries than are now engaged in unfurling the banner of the Cross, the lack of trained Christian teachers is so acute as to cause uneasiness. Through the painstaking endeavors of individual pastors and several men, who have the welfare of the Church of Christ at heart, the latter have been prepared to do really efficient work in school; but a number of others engaged as teachers are not competent to teach religion. All they can do and be permitted to do, is to have the children memorize the text of Luther's Catechism, some Scripture-texts and hymns, and to read or relate the Bible History to their pupils to acquaint them with the facts narrated, nothing more. The training of capable teachers is a serious question that has not yet, for obvious reasons, had a satisfactory solution in South American church history, but deserves serious consideration.

### **Training an Indigenous Ministry.**

In the course of years some fifty ministers and several teachers have been sent from here to South America. For one reason or another, however, quite a number of these have returned after a variable period of service. That has been a serious drawback to the work in a number of cases. Moreover, we have never had enough

men to supply the demand. For that reason as well as in consideration of the fact that men born and reared in a certain country are more familiar with the characteristics of their fellow-countrymen and have no prejudice on their part to overcome, an institution for the training of such was founded at an early date. This now has quarters in a building beautifully located on an elevation and on a large plot of ground on the outskirts of Porto Alegre, the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, a neat town numbering about 200,000 inhabitants. The seminary, maintained by Synod, has two departments, one offering a preparatory course and the other a theological course. The entire curriculum embraces seven years. Besides the usual subjects, German, Portuguese, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew are taught. Spanish, under a special tutor, is added for the students who are to labor in other countries than Brazil. The school-year begins about February 15, immediately after the summer vacation of two months' duration.

About twenty ministers have been graduated from this institution, most of whom have been assigned to German congregations, while others labor among the Lusitano-Americans. A truly Christian spirit prevails at the seminary, and the graduates from this Concordia perform their duties conscientiously and to the satisfaction of the people who are desirous of learning the truth.

The present enrolment of those preparing for service in the Church numbers fifty. Among that number are a few students from Germany. All room and board at the seminary. Tuition is free. The charge for board is 340\$000 (\$42.50 in United States currency, at an 8\$000 rate of exchange) per year. Last year three students paid their own bills, one received the amount from a generous Christian, and the rest were boarded at the expense of the Brazil District. This year 43 are pursuing their studies at the seminary, 7 are out doing supply work.

The faculty at present numbers four instructors: Professors Paul Schelp, L. C. Rehfeldt and assistants E. M. Plass, S. T. M., and A. O. Meyer, S. T. M. The presidency has been vacant for some time, but will be filled, it is hoped, in the near future.

### Organization of the Brazil District.

Even to-day great distances separate the missionaries from one another. They meet very infrequently. To attend conventions in the United States is an impossibility for any of them, unless some of them, whose home is here, happen to be here on furlough. Therefore it was deemed expedient and necessary to organize a synodical District in that far-off country. So when Rev. L. Lochner, a member of the Board for Home Missions in Foreign Countries, visited Brazil, steps were taken to effect such an organization. This was done at



Rincao Sao Pedro at a convention held June 23—27, 1904, by 14 pastors, 10 congregations, and 1 teacher, 9 pastors being present and 8 congregations being represented by as many duly authorized delegates. The first officers chosen were: Rev. W. Mahler, President; Rev. H. A. Klein, Vice-President; Rev. R. Kern, Secretary; Rev. H. Petersen, Assistant Secretary; Mr. H. Wilke, Treasurer. The present officers are: Rev. J. Busch, President; Rev. C. F. Lehenbauer, First Vice-President; Rev. A. T. Kramer, Second Vice-President; Rev. C. Gundermann, Secretary; Prof. P. Schelp, Treasurer. The District meets annually, except when the General Body has its convention. The mornings are usually devoted to doctrinal discussions and the afternoons mainly to a consideration of reports by the Brazilian Board on the progress of the missions. (Since Argentina has its own board, its reports are made to the Board of Home Missions for South America directly.) The District assembled this year. It discussed the importance of the Christian day-school and the question: What about state subvention for religious schools? (Any publications of the Brazil District may be ordered from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.) The Brazil District has had a considerable growth, notwithstanding the fact that quite a number of the congregations in South America hesitate to become closely affiliated with our Synod because they still fear that Synod might claim their property and compel them to submit to legislation of Synod. This fear is due to calumniators of our Synod, who do not like to see it expand. Nevertheless the membership of the Brazil District has increased to 34 congregations (two of which are in Argentina), 53 ministers, 4 professors, and 7 teachers. Financially, however, it is the most dependent of all Districts and needs the generous and liberal support of the General Body. In 1916 President F. Pfotenhauer paid the District a visit, which proved of great benefit to our South American Zion.

The District is divided into conferences, which meet between conventions for the purpose of advancing members in the knowledge of Christian doctrine and Biblical practise. In Brazil there are three such conferences: Sao Lorenzo, Porto Alegre, and North-western. In Argentina there is but one, of which all the missionaries in that country are members, and which is attended by two representatives from Brazil once every year.

### Results of Our Missionary Activities.

Rev. Mahler, our first missionary in Brazil, had labored in Sao Pedro, twenty-five to thirty miles inland from Pelotas, but a short time, when four men followed him. The next year five more were required. And the work has continued to grow from year to year. Almost every year it has been necessary to strengthen the forces by



adding to them. From time to time, colonies that had not yet been served by our men asked to be cared for by them. Thus the missions in Brazil have grown to number 75 congregations and 63 preaching-stations with a total of 20,469 souls, ministered to by 37 pastors, not including the professors. There are 64 schools with 32 teachers and 31 ministers actively engaged in educational work, and 2,047 pupils.

The congregations own property valued at 414:500\$000 (\$51,812.50). Last year they raised 57:831\$000 (\$7,228.87) toward the support of the missions and 11:206\$000 (\$1,400.85) for other purposes.

In Argentina progress was not quite so rapid in the beginning as in the republic to the east. For two years, work was confined to San Juan, the first town to call one of our men. But then five congregations in the Pampa Central came under the care of Rev. A. Heine, who had been stationed in the capital city, Buenos Aires, as missionary. From that time on the mission began to flourish and prosper. Congregations and preaching-stations began multiplying. From the beginning to the present time the missions have had an average increase of 320 souls annually. Since 1916 the number of congregations as well as souls ministered to by our missionaries has been almost doubled, and the number of pastors increased from 4 to 13. The total number of congregations is 25; preaching-stations, 34; souls, 5,657; schools, 11; pupils, 285. The amount raised for home purposes by the congregations last year was 31,900 pesos (about \$10,300); for other purposes, 1,936 pesos (about \$645).

In Paraguay, where work was begun two years ago by Rev. Huebner, one of the missionaries in Argentina, two stations are being served regularly. Two stations which had been opened were discontinued because all Lutherans secured land in Misiones, on the other side of the Parana River. The two colonies receiving attention now number 13 families, or about 100 souls. Some of these colonists had not heard the call to repentance for years and had grown indifferent to the means of grace. As it takes the missionary more than a month to make his circuit, and since the stations cannot be visited very often, improvement cannot be expected in a short time; but patient labor will eventually bear fruit.

As regards all the fields, the conditions in church and school cannot be said to be ideal. Neither will any one expect that. The facts stated without gloss or varnish are the following. There is much indifference and lack of appreciation of God's grace in some quarters. Progress in these congregations is very slow and the work very trying. At times the missionaries are almost on the verge of losing courage and quitting the work altogether because of the in-

gratitude of the people for the precious gifts of God. In some places the services are not attended as they should be, and a unionistic spirit threatens to get the upper hand and undo all that seemed to have been attained. The partaking of the Lord's Supper on the part of the communicant membership averages less than once a year, and it is difficult to get all to make due announcement when they wish to commune. Nor are the offerings in such congregations in proportion to the blessings conferred upon them by the Lord or to the income and the ability of those who insist on an equal tax for all, and a tax at that which is very low. Among such people also other great infirmities and defects are to be observed in their lives.

On the other hand, there are congregations, too, that manifest a genuine hunger and thirst for the means of grace. The members grow in knowledge and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, they value the saving truths proclaimed to them, and valiantly and staunchly defend them; they also bring generous offerings and lead a life that redounds to the honor of their Redeemer. In some of the congregations we find people who are diligent students of the Word of God and eagerly read our Lutheran literature, who also give valuable aid and support to the pastor, and would be an ornament to any Christian congregation. In several instances people have sacrificed their property for the sake of the unadulterated Gospel, and though the houses of worship represented no great financial value, the loss to the faithful flocks was keenly felt by them. Others who had met for worship in rented quarters have built their own chapels and churches. Though most of them are of rough or planed boards, of adobe or inexpensive brick, treated to a coat of whitewash or plaster, the congregations are happy to call them their own, and the Lord is pleased to dwell there rather than in the gilded cathedrals and sumptuous temples of those who dishonor His name. In Argentina two congregations have become self-sustaining, and a few others are expected to follow this good example in the near future. In Brazil a few churches are reported to be striving for this goal with earnestness of purpose, one of them being well on the way to success.

This presentation of our missions, though partly of a disappointing nature, ought nevertheless not to discourage us; on the contrary, the fact that the Lord has so abundantly blessed our South American missions should inspire us with new zeal and move us to pray most fervently for our missions and to cooperate indefatigably with our missionaries, in order that the whole continent to the south of us may hear the Gospel. If we shall do so in sincere gratitude for the Savior's mercy to us, we may be sure that He will not withhold His blessings.

Chicago, Ill.

AUGUST BURGDORF.

